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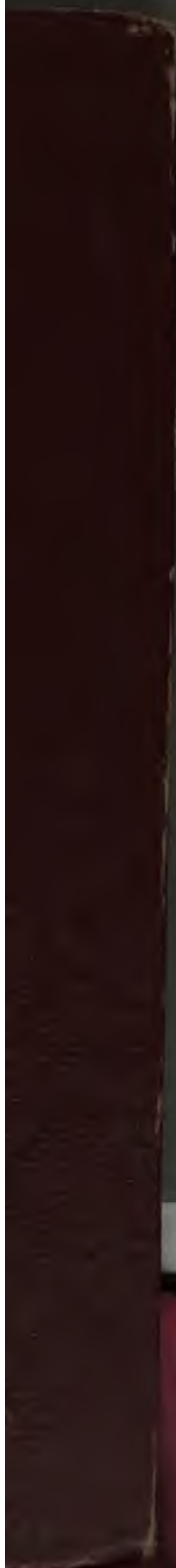
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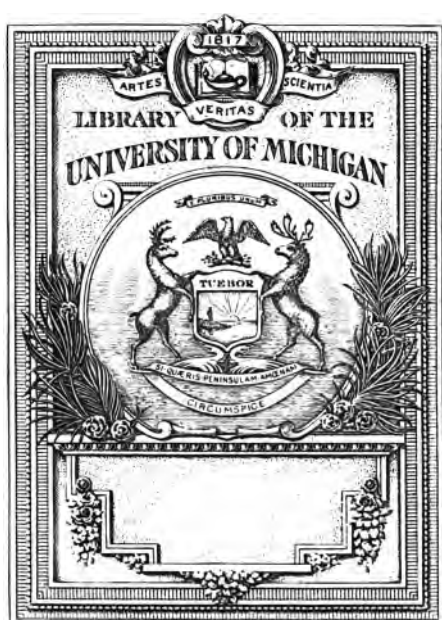
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INDIAN RECREATIONS;

CONSISTING OF

THOUGHTS ON THE EFFECTS

OF THE

BRITISH GOVERNMENT

ON THE

STATE OF INDIA:

ACCOMPANIED WITH

HINTS CONCERNING THE MEANS OF IMPROVING THE
CONDITION OF THE NATIVES OF THAT
COUNTRY.

BY

THE REV. WILLIAM TENNANT,

A.M.L.L.D. AND M.A.S.

LATELY ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S CHAPLAINS IN INDIA.

VOL. III.

THE SECOND EDITION.

Beneficio quam metu obligare homines malit, exterasque gentes fide ac societate
junctas habere, quam tristi subjectas servitio. *Titus Livius.*

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This volume, which is now presented to the Public, terminates the Author's labours on the subject of India. Of the manner in which his task has been executed, it is not his province to determine ; yet he may be allowed, perhaps, to suggest, that the subjects treated of in this last portion of the work, are still more useful and interesting than those of the two preceding volumes, which have shared so liberally of the public favour : Should the young adventurer to India honour it with a perusal, he may venture to assure him, that he will possess more knowledge of the country and its inhabitants, than the author himself could obtain when he visited it, after much pains and extensive reading. On the impartiality of this narrative, the Reader, he trusts, may rely with confidence, for it must soon become manifest, that the encomiums bestowed on the Marquis of Wellesley's administration are more justly to be ascribed to the real merits of that nobleman, than to any partiality or bias in the mind of the writer.



INDIAN RECREATIONS.

SECT. I.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE LATE CAMPAIGNS IN ASIA,
AND THE RAPID EXTENSION OF OUR INDIAN
EMPIRE.

THE views that were exhibited in a former part of this work* of the domestic and rural economy of the Mahomedans and Hindoos, had suggested, to a very competent judge, that an inquiry into the effects of the British government, on that celebrated portion of its subjects, might prove both interesting and useful. This hint he communicated to the author, and it called forth the remarks contained in this tract: for however doubtful it may be, whether the proper time

VOL. III.

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* The two first volumes of Indian Recreations, were composed in that country, during the four concluding years of the past century.

has yet arrived for justly appreciating the merits of our government in India, there can be no difference of opinion regarding the general interest attached to this subject.

Whether the comforts of so many millions of our fellow creatures are to be injured or promoted by the great increase of European influence in the East, is a question which is becoming daily of more serious import, in proportion to the extent of power and territory acquired there by the different maritime nations. Whether, in particular, the rapid extension of the British empire in Asia be destined to accelerate or retard the progress of the natives in knowledge, wealth, and happiness, is a question possessing strong attractions to every contemplative being: to the mind of a Briton it presents an interest peculiarly powerful and commanding: since it cannot be denied, that, from the extent of our possessions in that quarter, the enquiry becomes intimately connected with the destinies of his native country, and the honour of its government.

Nor is this speculation destitute of practical use. A statement of the effects of European rule on the condition of the Asiatics, if drawn up with tolerable accuracy, could not possibly fail to suggest several means of lessening the evils attending distant conquest, and of increasing its beneficial influence in all cases where its effects had been found salutary.

With regard, however, to the British power in India, the period of fairly ascertaining the nature of its influence on the natives, is (according to the opinion of some) hardly yet arrived. Forty years have scarcely elapsed, since we first enjoyed the quiet possession of almost any portion of our Indian territory; a period, perhaps, too short fairly to judge of the nature and effects of any government on the comfort and improvement of its subjects.

That æra when it arrived at full maturity and vigour, and when it consequently possessed a complete ascendancy and controul over the politics of India, could alone display its genuine effects, and determine the true nature of its influence. Previous to this period, it had to contend for its defence and self-preservation amidst the surrounding hostility of semi-barbarous states; it was then also cramped and fettered in forming its internal arrangements for the peace and security of its own subjects; it was often interrupted and disturbed in its plans by contiguous anarchy, constantly perpetuated by the ferocious turbulence of neighbouring chiefs. In estimating, therefore, the improvements that have been made by the British government on the condition of India, we must state in the account, the feebleness of its power after its first establishment, and the recent nature of many of its provisions, which will often justly explain the small progress that sometimes appears to have been made in accomplishing its ends.

The time, however, was destined soon to arrive, when the British government in the East was to occupy a rank and station enabling it to surmount those multiplied difficulties. The shock of the French revolution, which in Europe overturned the balance of power, and destroyed the existing relations between its different states, was felt at the same time in Asia, where its effects, it would seem, had a far more sudden and decisive operation. It appeared almost instantaneously either to check or annihilate the French influence throughout the whole of Hindostan, and in its room to establish, or consolidate, the British power.

Prior to the year 1799*, more than two thirds of the antient territory of the Mogul empire still remained in the hands of populous and independent states, professing either the Hindoo or Mahomedan faith; among the latter, the Nizam and the King of Mysore held the chief rank; while five powerful Mahratta chiefs, the adherents of Brahminism, occupied the first station in the former class.

Some of these princes individually had, in former times, arranged themselves, during the wars of Hindostan, on the side of the antient monarchy of France; but the republican councils, by which that monarchy was subverted, embraced a much wider range in their foreign policy. They attempted to form, at once, all those different chiefs, collectively, into a combi-

* The period of the conquest of Seringapatam and the Mysore.

nation, which was intended to be made the powerful instrument of their own ambition. The same imperishable thirst after external conquests, and universal dominion, which instigated that nation to attempt those momentuous changes which we have so lately beheld in Europe, seems to have become more violent in the East, and to have characterised the whole of its policy in India.

- Confidential agents had already been dispersed
- over the territories of the greater number of the independent princes ; officers from France had been appointed in their armies ; and had for several years been busily employed in disciplining their troops, and in forming among the native chiefs a combination, for the purpose of not only subverting the British government, but of annihilating, throughout the Peninsula, every power that seemed hostile to their own.

It must be confessed, that the power of this mighty confederacy, had it been possible to effect a co-operation of its members, in any common system of policy, was much more than sufficient to subjugate the whole of India, and to execute, perhaps, the most extensive schemes even of French ambition. The Mahratta empire, if properly consolidated, must of itself command an immense force. Stretching throughout the whole length of the peninsula, from the Bay of Bengal to the banks of the Indus, its population has been estimated at no less than forty

millions of souls ; while its known revenue has been found to amount to upwards of seventeen millions sterling. These resources, however ample, are in India far more efficient than in Europe, for they have been, on experiment, found adequate to the establishment, and constant support of an army of upwards of 300,000 men.

Nor has the progress of the French, in communicating European tactics to this immense force, been at all disproportioned to their schemes of policy, and the magnitude of their views. Many battalions in the service of the Peshwah, and of Holkar, but especially in the establishment of Scindiah, have been found in a state of discipline that would have been deemed creditable in many European armies. Among the troops of this latter prince, the brigade of General Perron has long been distinguished, by a system of tactics hardly inferior to that of the British army ; it consists of about 40,000 men, regularly brigaded and regimented, and as completely armed and clothed as our seapoy corps, while its pay is regularly advanced, and in the field all its operations are sustained by a well-appointed artillery, consisting of wards of 400 pieces of ordnance.

To the charge of this favourite portion of his Scindiah had committed the capital of the empire, and the custody of the venerable, but unfortunate Shah Allum, a monarch who, it is said, has

the uncommon period of 90 years*; and who, it would seem, is more wasted and broken down by an unexampled load of calamity, than by either the weight or feebleness of his singular age. The forcible restraints to which this unhappy prince was subjected, easily enabled the French party among Scindiah's troops to wrest from him the sanction of the imperial name, and the semblance, at least, of legitimate authority. It was accordingly in the vicinity of the capital, and almost in the presence of the emperor, that their projects seemed to tend to maturity, with the most steady and rapid progress. Considerable advances had already been made towards the formal cession of the important provinces of Agra and Delhi to the French government, and towards their final union with that distant kingdom.

Fortunately for the independence of the neighbouring states, and the safety of the British empire, the nobleman who had been appointed to the government of India at this critical period, possessed a complete comprehension of the character and views of the French nation: soon after his arrival, his innate sagacity and perseverance enabled him to penetrate into the whole range and extent of the vast plans of hostility which they had meditated; he was fully aware of the critical situation of the British empire in India, and with equal promptitude and energy

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* He lately died, but not till he had been liberated by the British army, and restored to a state of comfort and opulence.

he employed the whole resources of its power to avert and repel the danger.

It was, however, at Hydrabad, in the Decan, that the impatience and activity of French intrigue first compelled him to meet actual hostility in the field: an insurrection of the French officers there, had wrested from the Nizam the whole authority over his army; and, in fact, had already converted that faithful and peaceable ally of the British, into an open enemy. By a sudden and unexpected movement of a small part of our army, that had been prepared for this purpose, those officers were all suddenly apprehended, and the allegiance of the Nizam, and the subordination of his army, were almost instantaneously restored. This first act of the Marquis Wellesly, though scarcely heard of in Europe, certainly argued favourably of his government, for it not only paved the way to his subsequent success against t^e Mysore, but from its promptitude and decision it served to be ranked among the most meritorious measures of his whole administration.

The vengeance of the king of Mysore, of his former losses and defeats, had not suffered to enjoy a moment of tranquillity after the last operation*. He had, in fact, been raising up a Median confederacy, which was to consist of the Grand Seignior, the Persian Chiefs, the

* Effected by Marquis Cornwallis

Oude, and the Nizam, and was intended for a purpose no less splendid in the eyes of the faithful, than the extirpation, not only of the British, but of all the enemies of Islamism throughout Hindostan. The army of this prince was fully prepared to take the field, but the fortunate event that has just been related, had deprived him of the co-operation of the Nizam, his nearest, and therefore his most efficient ally.

- The native princes of India are, in general, far more prompt in imbibing resentment, and in learning maxims of hostility against their neighbours, than cautious or prudent in their application. Their French instructors were also, at this period, so much intoxicated with the new form which their own government in Europe had assumed, that they had instituted a society, in the capital of Mysore, for the romantic purpose of spreading the doctrine of liberty and equality among the despots and slaves of Asia. The sovereign of Mysore himself was easily persuaded to become an honorary member of this institution, where he appeared among its associates under the name of *Citizen Tippoo*, an appellation, perhaps, the most awkward and incongruous that had ever been assumed by an Eastern Despot. The wild and frantic orisons that were daily poured forth in this club, in favour of an imaginary liberty, were constantly accompanied with sentiments of detestation, and vows of eternal hostility against the British government; its forces were therefore instantly prepared and

marched into the field to meet an aggression, which there had been so little care taken to conceal. Past experience had taught the British officers to avoid the pursuit of a native army in its rapid and discursive evolutions in the field; the British, therefore, marched directly towards the capital of the enemy, which fell, but not till two decided victories had been obtained without its walls, and also an obstinate defence had been made in the interior of the city. In this last conflict*, which was maintained by both the assailants and the natives with equal valour and obstinacy, much blood was spilt, and the lives of many brave men were lost, among the rest that of Tippoo Sultaun, whose body was found, after long search, among heaps of the slain, where he had fallen nobly defending the last bulwark of his kingdom, and where, however unfortunate he may be deemed in other respects, he at last met with a fate not unworthy of his bravery.

By the pacification at Hyderabad, the fall of Seringapatam, and the death of Tippoo Sultaun, the Mahomedan branch of the grand confederacy, which the French had raised against the British in India, was completely broken and finally destroyed. For although the few remaining adherents of the deposed monarch made some desperate effort for the restoration of his family, these were rendered

* This memorable attack was led by General Cornwallis, who had been for three years confined in a dungeon.

tive by the activity and vigilance of those British officers who had been left in charge of the conquered country*. The campaign against the Mysore was, therefore, completed by a signal act of justice, as creditable to the government of India, as the late brilliant successes had been honourable to the British arms. The greater part of the vanquished territory was restored to the Rajah of Mysore, and his ancient family again mounted that throne, from which they had been driven by the treachery and usurpation of Tippoo and his father : nor did the vengeance of the British, though hurled with such destructive rapidity against the most formidable and inveterate of all their enemies, prevent them from affording sympathy and relief to the surviving family of the Mysorean kings ; ample endowments were set apart for their support, which still they continue to enjoy, with perhaps equal comfort, and certainly with greater security, than in the most prosperous days of the fortunes of their house.

This train of important and successful events took place during the short space of only a few months after the arrival of the Marquis of Wellesley, and they certainly entitled his administration to rank with the most active and brilliant that had ever been displayed by any governor of India : according, however, to

* Particularly by Sir Arthur Wellesley, who signalised himself by the defeat of Doondea Waugh, the most steady adherent of Tippoo.

his views of the state of that country, he must have regarded his labours as scarcely half finished. He saw the immense power of the Mahratta empire still remaining not only unbroken, but daily encreasing and consolidating under the active and unceasing operation of French influence. A French state, as already noticed, of large extent and formidable power, had been framed, by the successive labours of Generals De Boyne and Perron, around the capital of India. This nascent power, the all-devouring ambition of the new emperor had already grasped as a rich prize, and its destruction became therefore absolutely necessary to the safety of our empire in India ; since, amidst all the multiplied aggressions of his neighbours, the usurper had uniformly distinguished the British nation as the marked, though not perhaps the ultimate object of his hostility.

The reduction of a hostile power so immediate in the vicinity of our possessions, might certainly have justified a war ; but as no actual aggression yet been committed in that quarter, it was on the other side of the peninsula that the Marquis of Lesley was again first called upon for the support of the interests of his government ; this became at once pressing and immediate, by the application of the whole Mahratta power by a side and by the expulsion of the Peshwa, the ultimate object of that government.

The politics of India were never so refined, or considerate, as to admit of a balancing system, by which the overgrown power of any individual state might be prevented from endangering the independence of the rest. Hardly any circumstance of common danger has ever been deemed sufficiently urgent to unite the native princes in the defence of the country, even against foreign invasion. During the contest between the British and the king of Mysore, the Mahrattas observed a suspicious neutrality: They gazed on the combatants with an indifference that bordered on fatuity; and which strongly forboded the dissolution of their state. After the fall of that kingdom, their empire actually displayed a state of anarchy that demanded the most prompt measures of precaution for the safety of the British territories and those of its allies, which lay around its frontier. The constitution of their empire, originally ill constructed and undefined, had lately been radically changed. The ancient Rajahs of Satarah, who had originally laid the foundation of its power, and extended its influence over the peninsula with such unexampled rapidity, had gradually sunk from the rank of Sovereigns to imbecility; and, owing to the personal ambition of their servants, fell into a station, if not of absolute privacy, at least of compleat insignificance.

Their ministers, already become hereditary in their offices, and too powerful for controul, had sufficient influence to remove the seat of Government

from Sattarah, and to constitute the town of Poonah the capital of the Empire. There, removed from the eyes of the Princes, they no longer deigned to preserve further allegiance, than the semblance of delegated power. They accordingly retained the appellation of Peshwa, but compelled the subordinate members of the confederacy to acknowledge them as the legitimate organ of the whole executive power of the state, whether civil or military: It is, however, scarcely possible, accurately to define either the rights, or the power attached to the Peshwa, after his being acknowledged representative of the supreme head of the Empire. The extent of his prerogatives seems to have varied, at different times, according to the personal talents and ambition of each incumbent in the exercise of this recent power.

Bajee Rao, the present Peshwa, from that imbecility and indolence, which in Asia is so often attached to high station, had devolved upon inferior almost the whole of the active duties of his office. His power had frequently been disputed and controlled; he had at different times nearly been a prey to the ambition of the subordinate chiefs. At the period now under review, though defeated by Scindiah, he had been completely defeated by the British troops, and obliged to flee for security to the limits of his own dominions.

The danger to the British possessions, and those of their allies, became pressing and immediate from this usurpation of almost the whole Mahratta power by the hands of a single chieftian; and the cause of the Peshwa thus became identified with that of our India Government.

A treaty of defensive alliance between the India Company and the Peshwa was therefore drawn up, at least by the consent, if not by the solicitation of that Prince; and was finally ratified at Basscin, where he had fled from the aggressions of Holkar for protection. By this instrument it was stipulated, that he should be restored to his dominions, and to the exercise of his legitimate authority, on condition of his maintaining, for the defence of his territories, and at his own expence, a brigade of British troops; which, it was at first agreed, should consist of six thousand; but afterwards the number was increased to ten thousand men.

The terms of this convention were no sooner arranged, than the British army, under Sir Arthur Wellesly, marched towards Poonah, with that promptitude and decision which have always distinguished the services of this valuable officer. The rapidity of his movements, and his unexpected advance, saved the capital from destruction: for the troops of Holkar, who had continued to pillage the city since it fell into their possession, had at last resolved to finish the catastrophe by setting it on fire.

Alarmed, however, by the sudden approach of the British army, they fled from the place with the utmost precipitation, and soon after abandoned the territory of Poonah. Room was thus made for the peaceable restoration of the deposed sovereign; and the Peshwa, when he afterwards arrived, was received by his subjects, not merely with submission and quietness, but with every mark of the sincerest joy and satisfaction. During his absence, the inhabitants had been subjected to the severest forms of military execution; and forced to submit to the various exactions of a chief, the most needy, desperate and rapacious of all the leaders of the predatory bands of his countrymen. When, therefore, they again beheld their lawful Sovereign, they greeted his return by salutes from all the forts in his kingdom, and testified their joy by illuminations on the tops and acclivities of the hills throughout the whole vicinity of Poonah.

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Thus far the measures of the Governor of India wore an aspect of consistency and vigour, which figured well in favour of their ultimate success. The justice of his interference at this time, to check the overgrown power of an aspiring adversary, and succour the distress of a fallen prince, will hardly be questioned by such as are versant in the politics of India: Nor will it be denied, since all the Monarchs exercised the right of making treaties for themselves, that the same privilege belonged to the Emperor of the Empire.

According to these views, the defensive treaty of Bassein was not only avowed by the parties, but freely communicated to the rest of the chiefs, who explicitly acknowledged that it contained no stipulations injurious, either to the principles of their constitution, or to the just rights of any member of the Mahratta confederacy. On the other hand, its advantages were sufficiently obvious : It had the immediate effect of quietly restoring a deposed Prince to his throne, and to the exercise of his acknowledged rights ; and of checking a dangerous usurpation : It detached, from the influence of French councils, a very important branch of the Mahratta confederacy ; and therefore coincided with the general tenor and spirit of British policy in India.

But the power of the Peshwa, and the predominant rights, which by the constitution of the Empire were attached to his office, had, as was already noticed, become a grand object of ambition among the more considerable chiefs. Scindiah had for many years struggled for the ascendancy at the Court of Poonah ; and, on some occasions, actually attained a powerful interest in its councils. Ragojee Boonsla had, from family connections, some grounds for the advancement of his own claims to this office ; while Holkar had lately, by the fortune of war, the whole authority within his grasp, and in the name of Amrut Rao, brother to the Peshwa, had actually begun to exercise the whole of its functions.

INDIAN RECREATIONS.

The final deprivation of these chiefs of so fair an
out of aggrandizement as the general controul of
whole Mahratta Empire, seemed to reproach their
olence and want of ambition; and the nearer they
nsidered its attainment, the stronger was the disap-
intment and jealousy which its loss occasioned.
The deep resentment thus excited among these chiefs,
though unacknowledged by themselves, was the true
cause of that open hostility which they were now a-
bout to commence against the British power.

Thus impelled by the strong emotions of disap-
pointed ambition, Scindiah, and the Raja of Nag-
pore, entered into an engagement, in order to frustrate
the arrangements so lately stipulated by the trea-
ty of Bassein. With this view, each set on foot a
large army, which was marched from different quar-
ters to a point of union, bordering on the territorie
of the Nizam, an ally of the British. This menacing
position they maintained for a considerable time,
in order to complete their own preparations, and
urge Holkar to join their confederacy; nor c
they be persuaded to abandon it by the strong
monstrances of our Government against militar
parations, at a period so unnecessary for the
defence, and in a situation so incompatible w
peace and safety of the British allies.

The Marquis of Wellesley, however im-
might be to hazard the tranquillity and sa
British Empire in the East, by entering

test with these two powerful chiefs, whose territories actually stretched over more than half of the peninsula of India, had, however, no alternative left him. The full and positive information which from various sources he had obtained, of the nature and extent of those schemes of hostility, which had for some time been meditated, was now confirmed by the actual preparations that had been made for carrying them into execution. He foresaw the dangerous crisis before its approach, and the hollow professions of friendship that were constantly sent in answer to his remonstrances, did not, for a moment, prevent him from bringing forward the whole resources of his government to defeat their enterprises.

A combination of the Mahratta empire, so extensive and powerful as that now raised by the confederates, had never hitherto been brought into action against the British power: and, it must be acknowledged also, that a system of defence, equally prompt, vigorous, and extensive, was never planned by any former Governor of India. Five different armies, each of considerable force, were speedily prepared to invade the territory of the enemy, nearly at the same period of time*. The value of the previous arrangements that had been formed with the Nizam and the Peshwa, particularly the subsidiary treaties, was now

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* The army brought into the field, amounted to 55,000, after providing for the defence of the interior.

distinctly felt. By them, the British army was enabled to proceed through the friendly territories of allied chiefs, to the very boundary of the Mahratta dominions; where it was joined by a large subsidiary force both from Hyderabad and Poonah, which materially promoted the success of the campaign. The Marquis thus was enabled to attack the extensive dominions of the enemy, from almost every assailable point.

On the south, they were invaded by a powerful division of the Madrass army under Sir Arthur Wellesley; in Guzerat, on the west, by Colonel Murray, and a strong detachment of the Bombay troops: a simultaneous effort was also made by General Lake, in the northern extremity of Scindiah's dominions, where the main strength of his army was stationed, in conjunction with the celebrated brigade of General Perron: on the east, in Bundelcund, the same system of attack was pursued, where the adherents of the confederacy, Ali Mahomed, and Himmuthaudur, were overpowered and dispersed: during execution of these operations, the provinces of lasore and Cuttack were wrested from the Raghoojee, by the immediate direction, and the auspices of the Governor-General himself: he had planned and combined all these assaults with a degree of judgement and accuracy which secured uniform success; and which has proved as owing to his own talents, as the prompt execution of his plans has been honourable to our Indian

But the circumstance which appears most signally to have promoted the success of this eventful campaign, was the ample and unrestricted authority which was conferred on the different commanders carrying on their operations so far removed from the seat of Government: It was thus those officers were enabled to meet every new exigency, by the unrestrained application of all their resources; and to surmount or evade unforeseen difficulties as they happened to occur, by the immediate exercise of discretionary power. The unexampled rapidity of our victories, and vast extent of the conquests that were made in the short space of a few months, must be in some measure also ascribed to that just tribute of commendation which was so impartially and liberally bestowed on the officers and troops, after their hard fought battles. This approbation, equally merited and useful, inspired the army with a just confidence in its own strength, and preserved among the troops uncommon alacrity amidst their fatigues and dangers.

The strong partiality which the Marquis of Wellesley must have naturally felt for the brilliant services of his brother, on no occasion prevented him from discerning the merits of other officers, and from conferring on them their just share of applause. Immediately after the battle of Delhi, he expresses his sense of the services of General Lake and his army, in the following spirited and patriotic terms. In his general orders to the troops, he observes, "that on reviewing the rapid successes obtained by our arms,

within the short space of a few months, every loyal subject of the British empire must be animated with the most zealous emotions of just pride and national triumph. I have already expressed the sentiments of gratitude and admiration with which I contemplated the conduct of his excellency the commander in chief and his army, in the action of the 29th of August, and in the gallant assault of the fortress of Allyghur, on the 4th of September. The decisive victory gained on the 11th, in the battle of Delhi, justifies the firm confidence I reposed in the bravery, perseverance, and discipline of the army; and in the skill, judgment, and intrepidity of their illustrious commander. The glory of that day is not surpassed by any recorded triumph of the British arms in India, and is attended by every circumstance calculated to elevate the fame of British valour, to illustrate the character of British humanity, and to secure the stability of the British empire in the East."

The bravery of Sir A. Wellesly and his army, their achievements in the memorable battles of Assye and Argaum, in the Deccan, were not less conspicuous; nor were the general merits of this officer less worthy of those liberal and manly encomiums which he received from the Marquis. Both commanders enjoyed the approbation of their sovereign, and received from him those honours which are the reward of valour. Fortunately too, for the interests of the British empire, assailed at this period by the most inveterate of all its enemies, the solid

advantages resulting from those well-contested battles, were not inferior to the splendour of their achievements.

Their immediate consequences were, the defeat of the combined armies of the confederate chiefs ; and, from the loss of their artillery, an irreparable blow to their strength and resources, throughout the whole of the Deccan. These prosperous results were, no doubt, aided and accelerated by the auspicious progress of the army, at all the different points from which it invaded the Mahratta empire. Soon after these successes, the French officers attached to Scindia's army, having quarrelled with the native sirdars and with each other, abandoned the service of that chief ; after the example of Perron, their principal partizan, they submitted to the protection of the British commander, who suffered them to retire with whatever property they had acquired, and had been able to bring with them.

Thus the grand fabric of French power, which that nation had been anxiously raising up, with the assumed sanction of the imperial authority, and the more efficient support of the Mahratta power, was at last broken down, and utterly destroyed throughout the whole of India. The conquest of Balasore and Cuttack, by Colonel Harcourt, seemed well calculated to prevent its future renovation, for it connected the two presidencies of Bengal and Madras, and united the British territories along the Coromandel coast,

where they now present a hostile and uninterrupted frontier against every inroad from the shore, and form a barrier against the introduction of French officers, to discipline the native armies of any inimical power.

The strong detachment of the Bombay army under Colonel Murray, though engaged in enterprises apparently less splendid, was equally serviceable in promoting the fortunate result of the campaign. This officer not only defended the British coast and territory in that quarter, and those of the Guickar Rajah, our ally, but reduced the fortress of Broach, Pouanghur, and other posts of importance. Thus in every quarter of this extended warfare was the British nation triumphant. On the shores of Guzerat and Balasore, on the mountains of the Deccan, and in the plains of Delhi, her banners were supported with equal energy and spirit, and victory every where continued steadily to follow them.

In the short space of three months, a succession of events had taken place, of such importance, as completely to change the relative condition of the British empire, and the different states of India. Seven hundred pieces of cannon were taken from the enemy, eight fortresses subdued, either by siege or escalade, their immense armies routed and dispersed, and the force of the French and Mahratta confederacy crushed, throughout a territory which extends a thousand miles square. What seemed of greatest importance,

in these warlike times, and in the critical situation of the British empire, then attacked and threatened with invasion, by a most inveterate and powerful enemy in Europe; her military reputation was heightened, the laurels she had lately gathered in Syria and Egypt were refreshed, and she enjoyed a satisfactory proof, that amidst encreasing luxury, and imminent danger, no portion of the enterprise and valour of her armies had been lost; for all her late victories in the East had been obtained over troops not in the ordinary circumstances of Indian armies. They were disciplined by European officers, and commanded with bravery and skill: the proficiency they had gained in European tactics was so great, that during the action of Assye, the Mahrattas made five different changes of position, and sustained on the same day an equal number of assaults before they yielded the combat: it was by the point of the bayonet alone that they were, on that occasion, compelled to relinquish their guns, an hundred of which were taken on the field, by an army scarcely amounting to a tenth part of that which had, with so much difficulty, been routed.

The Mahratta confederacy being finally subdued, a peace was concluded between the India Company, Dowlut Rao Scindiah, and the Berar Rajah, in January 1804. The short period of tranquillity that succeeded this event was speedily interrupted by Holkar, another powerful chief, whose expulsion of

the Peshwa had originally occasioned the war. This prince, though he kept aloof from the confederacy of his countrymen, with an indifference which seemed to argue at once a deficiency of patriotism and a want of sound policy, was nevertheless found to maintain the contest for his independence, with far greater skill and bravery, than any prince whom the British arms had opposed in India.

The power and resources of Holkar had gradually been increased; like that of the other chiefs, by the introduction of European officers into his army, and by an improved system of discipline, which was thus established. Thus formidable in itself, his power was rendered almost unassailable from the nature of his country, which is uncommonly mountainous, and, during the rains, impassable, from jungles and morasses. His skill in maintaining the predatory warfare, so congenial to a Mahratta army, was far superior to that of the other chiefs, whose experience had so fully taught him the danger of risking any regular engagement with European troops. Thus, although his territories were invaded on all sides by detachments of the Company's forces, he constantly eluded their attacks, and, by the singular rapidity of his movements, he was enabled suddenly to assemble almost his whole force, and overpower whatever weaker detachments he might find at a distance from support. In this situation the troops under Colonel Monson were surprised: this officer had march

against Indoor the capital, in concert with Colonel Murray, who had reached that place from Bombay, and captured it without much opposition : his less fortunate coadjutor, however, after being betrayed by his guides, and deserted by a part of his troops, was attacked by a superior force, under Holkar himself, before which he was forced to retreat towards Agra, through a country impassable from the rains, and destitute of provisions. After several disastrous conflicts, during a retreat of seven weeks, which degenerated into a flight, the greater part of his guns, the whole of the baggage and military stores, were lost : a few only of the troops reached Agra at midnight, in a state of extreme distress ; the greater part were overtaken in their flight, and either massacred or cruelly mutilated, by their ferocious pursuers.

Colonel Willot, of the Bengal artillery, was almost equally unsuccessful in an attack which he had planned against a strong post in the interior ; he failed in the attempt, and soon after died of the wounds he had received. It was in Bundelcund, and the country of the Rohillas, that Holkar received the most considerable checks. From both those territories he was completely driven by Lieutenant-Colonel Fawcitt and General Smith.

Parties of his cavalry had been repeatedly defeated by Lord Lake ; but the rapidity of their movements as often saved them from destruction ; and it was not till the decisive battle of Deeg, on the 13th of No-

INDIAN RECREATIONS.

ber, that the main strength of this enterprising
f was completely broken. At this place his army,
ting to the great strength of its position, behind
cessive ranges of batteries, was induced to hazard
general action. From these batteries, which ex-
ended to the depth of two miles, they were succes-
sfully driven by the gallant General Frazer, who had
the credit of forcing a post which had been deemed
impregnable, and which was at this period, defended
by 24 battalions of infantry, and 150 pieces of can-
non.

In this brilliant achievement, the General was
wounded in the leg, and soon after was obliged to be
carried off the field: the completion of the victory
thus fell to Colonel Monson, who now saw compleat
vengeance inflicted for his past disasters, and for the
unexampled cruelty of his enemy, 2000 of whom
were killed, either in the battle or during the retreat;
an immense number was wounded, and amongst these
many considerable chiefs, while 87 pieces of cannon
fell into his hands, which partly consisted of the same
guns which he had himself lost during his disastrous
retreat to Agra.

Had Holkar confided merely to his effective force
in the field, his cause might have now been regarded
as desperate. His boldness, however, and his un-
exampled success, had gained him the support of
several of the native princes: among these he had
seduced the Rajah of Bhurtpore, an ally of the B

tish, and the chief of the celebrated cast of the Jauts, the most warlike tribe in upper India. General Lake was therefore obliged to concentrate his army, and to employ it in the reduction of Bhurtpore, a fortress which experience has proved to have been the strongest and most impregnable in the whole peninsula. While thus employed, the dispersed troops of Holkar had time to rendezvous in distant quarters, and were successful in cutting off his supplies of provisions, and in plundering the surrounding districts, by that predatory mode of warfare for which the Mahrattas have been celebrated.

The reduction of Bhurtpore, thus defended by the indefatigable efforts of Holkar, by its intrepid garrison, and its own natural strength, proved the most arduous enterprise which the British troops had ever undertaken in Asia. The success of the besieged, in repelling four different assaults, animated them with fresh courage and intrepidity. The Rajah and his whole tribe were united by the ties of blood as well as of civil authority: they had claim to a high *cast* among the natives, which they knew must be forfeited for ever by unconditional submission: unfortunately these were the only terms which General Lake was permitted to accept. The Rajah, therefore, having collected in the fort, his women, his children, and his treasures, resolved to bury them all, and himself, under its ruins, rather than submit to terms which were deemed equally disgraceful to his religion and his rank.

Impelled by the orders of his superior, and un-
 daunted by all the past disasters which the troops had
 already suffered, General Lake resolved to hazard
 another attempt. In the account given of it in his
 dispatch to the Governor-General, dated 22d Fe-
 bruary, he observes, "that it appeared our failure
 on the 20th was to be accounted for, in a great mea-
 sure, by the occurrence of unexpected accidents and
 delays, as part of the corps who formed the storming
 party had surmounted the principal difficulty, and
 had nearly gained the summit of the bastion, where,
 I was informed, a few hours more battering would
 make the ascent perfectly easy, I determined to make
 another attempt yesterday.

"The party for this service consisted of the whole
 European force, and the two battalions of the native
 infantry of the Bengal army, and the greater part of
 his Majesty's 55th and 86th regiments, and the gre-
 nadier battalion and flank companies of the 1st bat-
 talion of the 3d regiment, from the Bombay division.
 The whole moved on to the attack about three o'clock
 in the afternoon, under the command of the Major
 Brigadier Monson. The troops, most confident of
 success, commenced the attack, and persevered in
 for a considerable time, with the most determined
 bravery; but their utmost exertions were not suf-
 ficient to enable them to gain the top of the breach.
 The bastion, which was the point of attack, was
 extremely steep; the resistance opposed to them
 vigorous, and our men could only mount by

parties at a time; the advantages were very great on the side of the enemy—discharges of grape, logs of wood, and pots filled with combustible materials, immediately knocked down those who were ascending; and the whole party, after having been engaged in an obstinate contest for two hours, and suffering very severe loss, was obliged to relinquish the attempt, and to retire to our trenches.” The loss of the British army in this last assault, and that of the 20th, amounted to 300 killed, and 1564 wounded: its whole loss, during the different attacks, amounted to upwards of three thousand of the bravest of our troops; while the unconditional surrender of the place was never attained.

The Rajah, however, again proposed the terms he had formerly offered, and consented to pay three lacks of rupees to the army, and the expences of the war. Hostages were given for the regular discharge of these sums, at different instalments. Thus the last prince in India, who resisted the British arms, was found to have made the most glorious defence of his independence, and to have secured for himself the most honourable terms. Holkar, himself, after having been often beaten, was at last deserted by almost the whole of his troops, and was obliged to escape to the mountains, with a retinue so scanty, as was hardly sufficient for the protection of his person. In this manner, an arduous campaign of eleven months was completed, after occasioning a greater loss of blood and treasure than had, perhaps, ever

been incurred by the subjugation of any single chief. Nor did this daring and magnanimous Prince consent to sue for peace till the Marquis had returned to Europe, and till he had witnessed the downfall of all the great chiefs of his nation; and, like another Galgacus, had the honour of being the last man who dared to uphold the standard of independence in his native country.

To enumerate the victories obtained by our arms in India, and to describe the advantages resulting from them, will hereafter form the most pleasing part of the British historian's duty: but to render his narrative useful, he will have another task to perform no less necessary: It will be his province to record the errors that may have been committed, and the disasters that have followed them: Where this is neglected, history ceases to be instructive, and posterity to improve. On this principle the future narrators of our late campaigns in the East may probably remark, that they have been almost uniformly attended with too lavish an expenditure. Although the Mahratta war continued only for the space of a few months, and the hostilities against Tippoo were concluded with almost equal dispatch; yet a debt had been contracted upon the treasury of upwards of thirty millions sterling. Had these operations been protracted by any unfortunate event, or had they even lasted the usual period of such immense undertakings, success would have been doubtful, or rather unattainable, from the impossibility of commanding

a sum adequate to their expence. In India, where the rate of interest is so enormous, and where war is an occurrence unhappily so frequent, its expence must be reduced to a scale more nearly corresponding to the resources of the country : In the progress of increasing territory, and of annually accumulating debt, our career in Asia is rapid and dangerous; nor is it difficult to foresee that abyss of destruction into which even a series of victories must inevitably lead.

The future historian may, perhaps, be credited for impartiality, should he hazard another remark, that the treaties of peace with the Mahratta Chiefs, which had been begun and concluded almost in a single day, were at once imperfect and precipitate. A subsidiary treaty had been almost uniformly concluded between the Company's Government and all the neighbouring Princes of India, as soon as the necessity of their condition might induce them to engage in that measure : The Nabobs of Oude, and of the Carnatic, the Nizam, and the Peshwa had been all successively engaged to maintain a subsidiary force in their own dominions. Experience had proved that this was the most effectual of all measures for the checking their appetite for continual war, and for preventing them from plundering their own subjects; the expedient at the same time has been found to supply pay and maintenance for the large additions that were made to the Company's native army. In forming the late treaties with the Nag-

pore Rajah, with Scindiah and Holkar, this important stipulation was omitted, though it had been proposed before the commencement of the war, and though experience had so repeatedly demonstrated it to be the most effectual means of securing the permanency of peace. Should a future war be afterwards found necessary to check the aggressions of these chiefs, the occurrence may be justly ascribed to the want of a subsidiary force in their territories, so necessary to disclose and to check their hostile machinations in their commencement *.

It is alleged, by those best acquainted with the subject, that our successes in the East have been uniformly aided by a prejudice entertained among the natives, that European skill and valour were irresistible in every open and regular attack. It may hereafter be objected, that in the last of our campaigns sufficient care has not been taken to support this opinion, so essentially necessary to our future safety, amidst the millions of Asia. The smallest victory, or even transient success on their part, destroys this salutary prejudice, and has always been found to animate them with the boldness and ferocity of tigers; and hence, there is not, perhaps, on record a single example of any detachment of our army,

* The author has the satisfaction to observe that these treaties have been since concluded, and that the Government of India had conceived the same idea of their necessity which is here pointed out.

either turning their backs, or yielding in a contest, that has not been almost instantly destroyed.

The war against Holkar which so soon succeeded the defeat of Boonsla and Scindiah, should not, perhaps, have been undertaken till the season had favoured, and till more certain means had been provided of compelling that chief to abandon his desultory warfare, and of forcing him to a decisive action. If he could not be surrounded by a numerous army, he should have at least been opposed by troops whose rapidity of movement was equal to his own; and by detachments of sufficient strength to resist any sudden junction of his irregular cavalry.

These dispositions of the native armies, already noticed, having been demonstrated clearly, by fatal experience, have established a maxim essentially useful in Indian warfare: That hardly a single enterprise should be hazarded of doubtful issue; and that no attempt should be made, till every possible means had been provided for ensuring success.

Had this maxim been followed with that strictness due to its importance, Colonel Monson's detachment would not, perhaps, have been allowed to penetrate so far, without support, into a country rendered almost impassable by the rains: and had the consequences of a check been sufficiently kept in view, that officer would, perhaps, *not* have receded a step before an enemy, where retreat was destruction.



The same observations are, by some, thought applicable to the storming of the fort of Bhurtpore. An example of European skill and bravery being compleatly baffled in the presence of the natives, in five different assaults, was, they imagine, far more detrimental to their reputation, than its capture could have been advantageous to our cause.

But notwithstanding all these exceptions, and after allowing these remarks, whatever importance they may be found to merit, still ample room will be left for commending the spirit of our Indian Government and the conduct of the army. In the short space of six years, more had been done by Marquis Wellesley for the destruction of French influence in the East, and for the enlargement and security of the British dominions, than ever had been accomplished by any Governor of India. Throughout that extensive country he left no Europeans to discipline the native armies; nor any independent powers under whom they could rally, in order to controul the British Government. Under his administration, that government, for the first time since its establishment in Asia, had the opportunity of pursuing plans of improvement without the opposition of an open foe, or the controul of a rival power.



SECTION II.

INDUCEMENTS TO ATTEMPT THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE CONDITION OF THE NATIVES OF IN- DIA.

From the slight sketch above given of our late campaigns in India, it appears that the British territories in that quarter, have been greatly extended. They now actually comprehend nearly one half of Hindostan and the Deccan ; while the power and influence of the British government has become paramount over the whole peninsula.

From the vicinity of Agra and Delhi, the ancient capitals of the Mogul Empire, the British dominions at present stretch east and southward, on both sides of the Ganges, to the bay of Bengal, through a range of country of more than a thousand miles, and containing, perhaps, the largest and most fertile plain on the face of the globe. Along the whole coast of

Coromandel, her detached possessions have been united, and a free communication established between the Presidencies, a circumstance which was formerly dependent on the will of the Raja of Berar.

The acquisitions made in these campaigns on the side of the Mysore, Poonah, and Guzerat, have also consolidated the British power on the coast of Malabar, and opened new sources of commerce on the west of India. And lastly, notwithstanding these accessions of territory, the assailable frontier of the Indian Empire is actually lessened, by the overthrow of the Mahratta confederacy. Instead of encircling, as formerly, their vast empire, it is now confined to a direct line, stretching across the upper part of the peninsula. Enough, in the opinion of many, has already been done for the enlargement of our power in the East: much also has been effected for its security; since more ample means have been acquired of maintaining peace and of securing the advantages of a regular government.

1. The very extent, however, of our Eastern Empire imposes new obligations. If its external defence be not rendered more difficult; the danger of losing it by other accidents, is perhaps, much greater. The magnitude of our Indian commerce, renders it of peculiar importance to the naval power of Britain. Though the resources of the empire not only survived the separation of America, but contrary to general

expectation, continued to flourish, it can hardly be imagined, that after the loss of India, its navy could maintain the same pre-eminent rank.

The internal energies of a free, commercial, and enterprising nation, are great, yet, by adverse circumstances, they may not only be weakened, but ultimately destroyed. The naval establishment of the India Company, exclusive of the extra and country vessels, and armed cruisers, amounts to upwards of one hundred sail of regular ships: these are mostly of a size fit to occupy a station in the line; while their navigation employs nearly 10,000 seamen. Their regular army is already greater than that of the state, and the territorial revenues by which it is supported, amount annually to the sum of seventeen millions sterling: no company, in the records of commerce, ever possessed such a magnificent property, or so great a naval power: its loss, when it arrives, must operate powerfully to shake, if not to subvert the government. A liberal and humane treatment of the natives of India, seems to be one of the best means of averting this catastrophe, which must prove dangerous, and which may prove fatal to the parent state. Over so vast an extent of empire, and over the almost countless multitudes of its subjects, a government of benefits and mutual affection will always be found stronger than a government of force, or of fear.

2. The distance of our eastern dominions from the seat of government, furnishes another motive for adopting measures of conciliation and beneficence into the system of administration. In Asia, conquests are not merely rapid but frequent, and this frequency has rendered changes in some degree familiar to the people; but our Indian territories are not only the most important, they are also the most remote of all the dependencies of the empire. Insurrections and disturbances in that quarter, could, almost on no occasion, be quelled by European succours, which, previous to their arrival, must have traversed over more than half the globe. That power, therefore, can hardly be deemed very permanent, which only rests upon means of support so distant, that its attack and ruin may be completed before even a rumour of its invasion had reached its defenders. Hence it is on the internal resources of India itself, that its government must chiefly rely for its stability and power.

It must look to the number, the attachment, and the increasing energies of the native inhabitants for its principal support. These advantages, however, can only be secured by conciliating the affections of the natives, by promoting, on every occasion, their true interests. This effort, to an enlightened people, can never appear in the light of a sacrifice, since the different parts of a state are united by the same interests.

3. The present state of Europe (which in its origin and effects, is wholly unexampled,) seems to inculcate new maxims and duties for the conduct of its rulers. The government of every state which retains any share of power, or even the prospect of independence, appears in this eventful crisis to be imperiously called upon to improve and invigorate all its resources. The few remaining states must either provide for a more combined, and energetic defence, or their names must speedily disappear from the list of independent nations. This seems now to be the only tenure of their existence, and unless speedy compliance is given to its conditions, their ruin must approach with the speed of an armed man.

If posterity shall hereafter enquire, what circumstances have so rapidly advanced the external power and the conquests of the French nation, at a period when the rest of Europe, apparently at least, enjoyed its full vigour and maturity, it can hardly fail to discern the true cause—an illiberal jealousy, arising from a state of protracted rivalry and hatred, between the surrounding nations. This has entailed upon their governments a selfishness and fatuity, which prevents them alike from discerning their true interests, or the extent of their danger. In this state of blind infatuation Europe still beholds them, year after year, falling the easy, and almost willing victims, of a people whom they had, in former times, often vanquished.

What other cause has successively laid so many nations, long renowned for valour, at the feet of an upstart, distinguished by no depth of policy, nor any enlarged views of government? a man who can discern no glory, but in beholding the mutual destruction of contending armies in the field; and who, in the spirit of the purest Vandalism, is looking for colonies, ships, and commerce, to spring up amidst the devastation of continual war, and the convulsions occasioned by his insatiable ambition.

Spirited resistance, or unlimited subjection, is now the only alternative which remains to the civilized nations, and their governments. Let them lay aside their selfishness and jealousy; let them unite their efforts, and this new Attila, which their own cowardice has raised in the heart of Europe, may yet be crushed. It is the peculiar glory of the British nation, that she has early foreseen this new tenure of her rank as an independent state. Amidst the apathy and blindness which has ruined so many governments, she has vigorously employed all her resources, and met every new aggression with fresh energy. Though opposed by every power, both in Europe and in India, which French hostility could raise against her, every new combination of her enemies has not only added fresh laurels to her warriors, but seems to have imparted new vigour to her resources, and enlarged her dominions. In this wise and spirited policy let her persevere; and since the

vigour of her measures has, in these critical times, not only effected the defence of all her territories, but has greatly enlarged her Indian empire, it behoves her to prove to her new subjects, that the generosity of Britons is not inferior to their valour, and that in diffusing the blessings of peace, and the benefits of good government, they are not less active than in the pursuit of victory.

4. We are impelled to redress the grievances, and ameliorate the condition of our Indian subjects, in order to refute the odious calumnies and imputations which the jealousy of rivals has cast upon our government. All the evils which were ever ascribed to the avarice of Carthage, or the ambition of Rome, the oppression of nations, and desolation of provinces, have been loudly charged against our India administration. It has been accused of not merely subverting the ancient Mogul Empire, but of substituting in its room a system of peculation, anarchy and rapine; and of confiding the happiness of the natives, and their property, to men of dissolute lives, and profligate characters.

The first of these imputations contains an anachronism so gross and palpable, that, to such as are acquainted with the history of India, it cannot possibly need any refutation; yet since the illusion has been spread among the vulgar, with uncommon malignity and success, it certainly merits some notice. From

every authentic statement of historical facts, we learn, that the Mogul Empire contained in itself the seeds of its destruction; that it was at no period free from gross irregularities and open rebellion; that the encroachments of European nations seldom interfered with the imperial power; and that the acquisitions of the British, being the latest, were subsequent to its dissolution.

We learn from the historian Ferishta, and in later times from the testimony of men still living, that their armies were not opposed to those of the Mogul. This historian, in one instance indeed, complains, that "from the negligence of certain governors, some districts on the coast had fallen into the possession of the idolators of Europe;" but the coast was never completely subdued, and he does not assert, that these districts were previously in the possession of the Emperor.

It appears also, from the most authentic records, that the Portuguese were settled at Chittagong, prior to the submission of Bengal to the Court of Delhi. According to the accurate Orme, the English, and not the Moguls, were the first possessors of a small district on the coast of Coromandel, of which they were deprived, though they purchased it from a native prince, the original proprietor. In fact, during the splendour of the Mogul empire, the power of Europeans, and especially of the English, was too in-

considerable to occasion any alarm, much less any substantial injury to the court of Delhi. At that period the power of these nations was chiefly of a maritime nature, and so far from impeding the general prosperity of the empire, rendered the most essential service to its commerce, and to the safety of its subjects during their pilgrimages to Mecca. This service was rendered in the most conspicuous manner by the English, who not only humbled the power of Angria, but extirpated numbers of the piratical states on the Malabar, who had continued to infest that coast, and to plunder the commerce of India, for no less a period than two thousand years.

It appears, therefore, to have been from the treacherous servants of the court, and from the usurpers of its authority, that the Europeans have chiefly acquired their Indian possessions. What seems most remarkable in these occurrences is, the conduct of these upstart princes themselves : instead of dreading the vicinity of the British, they courted their intercourse, and regarded their alliance as a desirable object. Their arrival at once opened a market for their commodities in the West, and encreased the demand for them; while the importation of specie, in payment, stimulated the industry of the indolent natives, and enriched their sovereigns.

It was the influence of these powerful motives, rather than the accidental services of Mr Broughton, which, some time after their settlement in Bengal,

procured for the British the *Phirmaun* of the Emperor, and the *Sumnud* of his Viceroy, establishing a commerce that had already been found mutually beneficial. The fear of losing this European traffic, and the revenue accruing from it, often influenced the councils of the native princes. It operated so powerfully on the rude and tumultuary government of Surajah Dowlah, in Bengal, that he sent pressing invitations to the British to return to Calcutta, only a few months after he had massacred the greater part of their countrymen, and expelled the rest from his dominions. In revenging this cruelty the India Company conquered Bengal; but it was from a prince who had already thrown off his allegiance to the court: and the imperial government, now reduced to a shadow, felt no other effect from the transaction, than the overthrow of one of its most powerful enemies. Circumstances nearly similar attended all the British conquests, in regard to the Moguls: and the aged representative of their monarchs, derives at the present moment from them, his sole protection against the cruelty of his enemies, and his only support and consolation amidst the infirmity of his advanced years.

But besides these alledged encroachments of the India Company on the Imperial power, it has been accused of cruelty and rapacity in the territories that were thus acquired. If this imputation be supported by facts, our Indian government must long since have become, not only unpopular, but odious, both

to the native princes and their subjects. From these quarters, however, no complaint has been heard. The favourable view in which the princes regarded the settlement of Europeans among them, has just been noticed, and the sentiments of their subjects have been more uniformly and decidedly in favour of that measure.

The disbursement of specie to the native tradesmen, and the security of their wages, which are regularly paid in advance, have enabled multitudes among the labouring classes to support themselves and their families with a degree of comfort experienced in almost no other part of that country. And the new intercourse which has thus benefited the labouring poor, has strongly contributed to improve the maxims of government, even among the natives themselves. In the vicinity of European factories, those predatory bands, which had so long infested the rest of the peninsula, have been gradually suppressed by the operation of a regular police. Those tumults and devastations consequent on so many revolutions, have long since begun to disappear, and have been succeeded by a degree of order and security, which affords many encouragements to the farmer and manufacturer that were formerly unknown; hence the surrounding districts have long enjoyed a state of much comparative tranquillity, and are at present distinguished by a degree of wealth and prosperity, which will in vain be sought for in any other part of India. The financial operations of the In-

dia government seem to justify these statements, since its land revenues have gradually increased in their different territories, and at present far surpass their amount in the most prosperous days of the Mogul empire.

These are the unequivocal symptoms, not of oppression, but of a just and equitable government; and that such is the comparative state of the European territories, and the rest of India, we have the concurring testimony of almost every person who has examined the state of that country. According to the most credible accounts, every flourishing town is either of their building, or has been supported and increased by their commerce. The most magnificent palace, perhaps, in the whole of India, is the work of the late Governor-General*: the great mosque at Benares was constructed to conciliate the Mahomedans, and both the plan and execution are to be ascribed to Mr Hastings. The most superb monument of architectural skill of which upper India can boast, was erected by Claude Martine, a private adventurer from Europe. In a word, it has been observed, that wherever Europeans have settled, there you invariably discern the traces of a more energetic government, and the achievements of a more enterprising people. A most satisfactory proof of this fact is exhibited by the garrisons and canton-

* The new Government-house, erected by the Marquis Wellesley.

ments that have been erected by the India Company, for the defence of the country, and the accommodation of the troops. These buildings are constructed in a style far surpassing every establishment of that kind in Asia, and are still unequalled in most nations of Europe.

By far the greater part of these improvements have been effected by the British nation alone, in the very infancy of her power, and while she was yet contending with her European rivals, and a multitude of native enemies, which they had raised up against her. Since those remote ages of peace and tranquillity, in which the Hindoos erected those immense fabrics for the purposes of their superstition, and which are still seen in the country, no buildings have been constructed of equal magnificence, to those which the British have erected within the last forty years.

If this proves nearly a just representation of the first establishment of the British power in the East, and of its subsequent administration, we shall be at a loss to discover those bold features of iniquity and violence with which the envy and disappointment of its rivals have painted it. The tribute of their hatred is perhaps no small degree of praise: and it would be more difficult (were we in this island unacquainted with party rage,) to account for the unqualified reprobation to which it has been doomed by some of our statesmen and political writers. A late orator, alluding, perhaps, to the Mogul conquests in India,

thus exclaims *; “ the Asiatic conquerors had soon abated of their ferocity; and the short life of man had been sufficient to repair the waste they had occasioned. But with the English the case was entirely different; their conquests were still in the state they had been in twenty years ago. They had no more society with the people, than if they still resided in England; but, with the view of making fortunes, rolled in, one after another, wave after wave; so that there was nothing before the eyes of the natives, but an endless flight of birds of prey and passage, with appetites continually renewing for a food that was continually wasting. With us there were no tributary superstitions, by which a foundation of charity † compensated for ages to the poor, for the injuries and rapine of a day.

“ With us, no pride erected stately monuments, which repaired the mischiefs pride had occasioned and adorned the country out of its own spoils: England had erected no churches, no hospitals, no palaces, no schools: England had built no bridges, made no high-ways, cut no navigations ‡, dug no

* Vide Burke’s speech on Fox’s India bill.

† It was not for many centuries that the Mogul conquests in India were compleated: and when compleated, annual plunder was always a part of their system, on collecting the revenues. The only hospitals in India for even the reception of natives, are built by the English.

‡ The canals of India, fell to ruin, or were filled during the anarchy which succeeded the Mogul dynasty: The only ones now in use are of English structure.

reservoirs. Every other conqueror of every other description, had left some monument of state or of beneficence behind him ; but, were we to be driven out of India this day, nothing would remain to tell that it had been possessed, during the inglorious period of our dominion, by any thing better than the ourang outang or the tiger."

The *only* observation which this harangue can merit, is, that it is untrue ; and that, in almost every single assertion, it is directly the reverse of truth, has been proved by a decision of the highest tribunal in the kingdom on a late solemn trial.

The principal reason for adverting to it is to shew, that the irregularities of our first settlers in the East had created an unfavourable opinion of their conduct ; otherwise no public assembly could possibly have listened to a strain of exaggeration so gross, unfounded, and absurd. No conquests were, perhaps, ever made without some disturbance, and some violation of the existing order of things. This attaches to the very idea of conquest ; the first subjugation of Bengal was, however, accomplished by a few Europeans, and occasioned less violence than any similar event recorded in history : If the fact had been otherwise, the aggression was solely on the part of the natives, and the guilt must be theirs also.

These unfavourable impressions are speedily wearing away, and a steady perseverance in a mild and

conciliating system of government is the best means of entirely effacing them. An assiduous attention to measures of this nature will always be found the best and most powerful refutation of the malevolent invectives that may have been thrown out against the agents of our India Government. Several of the most respectable of its servants, have long since recommended them to the Court of Directors; actuated solely by a regard for the comfort of the natives. A very intelligent work has lately been published on the agriculture and commerce of Bengal, by two of the servants of the Company*: It breathes the spirit of true benevolence, and details many rational schemes of improving the condition of our Asiatic subjects. Were these plans found impracticable, (which they certainly are not) this work has still the merit of rendering the state of that remote country better known than it has ever yet been in Europe.

With the same beneficent intentions, a clergyman of a very limited fortune, has advanced the sum of two thousand pounds to be distributed to the British Universities, for the most approved essays on the means of civilising the natives of India, and of diffusing the Christian religion in the eastern world.

Though the disquisitions of studious and speculative men may not, perhaps, suggest many arrange-

* Mr Colebrook, one of the provincial judges, and Mr Lambert, an intelligent merchant in Calcutta.

ments of practical value ; yet these essays are ably written, and possess at least the merit of drawing a more general attention to a very important enquiry.

Several among the natives are known to have made the language and literature of Europe their favourite study ; and their success has been proportioned to their avidity in the pursuit*. The very idea of employing the talents and learning of the most celebrated nation in Europe, in discussing the means of promoting their happiness, must prove highly flattering to these men. Such persons in India, as every where else, guide the public opinion by the influence of their knowledge and reputation ; and although they may sometimes smile at the ineptitude of the means that have been proposed for promoting their comfort, yet they cannot fail to receive favourable impressions from plans unquestionably benevolent.

4. In the last place, we are bound to promote the moral and civil improvement of the natives of India, from a regard to the safety and comfort of that portion of our countrymen who are settled among them.

In India, without an efficient police, and much care in the prevention and punishment of crimes,

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* This is certainly true of Tuffussil Hossein Kan, and many others, the employment of whom in diplomatic and military stations has done much credit to our India Government.

- both life and property would soon become altogether insecure. The native character, however amiable in some respects it may appear, is frequently stained with vices directly hostile to society. The crime of perjury, from the great defects of their religious system, is remarkably prevalent, and, in many instances, renders the execution of justice difficult and impossible.

“ The prevalence of this vice,” says Sir James M‘Intosh, “ which I have myself observed, is, perhaps, a more certain criterion of a general dissolution of moral principle, than other more daring and ferocious crimes, much more terrible to the imagination, and of which the immediate consequences are more destructive to society.” Perjury indicates the absence of all the common restraints by which men are withheld from the commission of crimes. It is an attack upon religion and law in the very point of their union for the protection of human society. It weakens the foundation of every right, by rendering the execution of justice unattainable.

Sir William Jones, after long judicial experience, was obliged, reluctantly, to acknowledge this moral depravity of the natives of India. He had carried out with him to that country a strong prejudice in their favour, which he had imbibed in the course of his studies ; and which in him, was, perhaps, neither unamiable nor ungraceful. This prejudice he could not longer retain against the universal testimony of

Europeans, and the enormous examples of depravity among the natives which he often witnessed in his judicial capacity.

In a society thus circumstanced, crimes must often escape detection; and when detected the ends of justice must sometimes be defeated. Hence in India, the records of the criminal courts are not a true measure of the guilt of the community; and the security of individuals is much less perfect than in the absence of such moral diseases.

Thus it immediately concerns every European who settles in India, however humble his station, or however narrow the sphere of his usefulness, to lend his aid in suppressing these vices, and thereby preventing the evils which are the result of them. Every individual settler in that country, occupies the station, either of a master of numerous servants, or of a magistrate or chief among many dependents. His influence is far greater than it was in Europe; and his motives for suppressing immorality much stronger. The station he occupies will often suggest to him, that one of the most important ends of life, is to render, some at least of the human race happier, and that this is most effectually done by making them better: If they fail in thus improving the lot of the natives, the task will promote their own virtue*; and will assuredly refute those charges of

* Sir James M'Intosh's charge to the Grand Jury.

injustice, rapacity, and dissipation, which have often been made against them.

“ It would be invidious and unbecoming,” says a late writer*, “ to point out the particular ill conduct of those who have filled important situations in British India. Their rapacity, their injustice, and their contempt of religion are subjects of common notoriety, injurious to that country where they have spent their early manhood, and destructive also of morality in this, where they exhibit in unreverenced age, instances of successful vice, and of opulent depravity.”

* Mr Cockburn, in an essay which obtained the Buchanan prize in the University of Cambridge, where this gentleman is appointed *Christian Advocate*. It is worthy of remark, that no particular malversation is here laid hold of, in order to ground this undistinguished and invidious charge. This, the *modest* essayist says, would be unbecoming : other moralists have held, that, before libelling a numerous and respectable body of men with the grossest imputations, the charges should not only be specific, but fully proved ; it deserves notice also, that the immediate occasion of penning this unprovoked and illiberal attack, was to obtain a magnificent bounty held out to the literary world, by one of those rapacious and abandoned servants, who are here so cruelly stigmatised ; and, although it may occasion the reader some surprise, we are obliged to add, also, that this extraordinary production of the *Christian advocate*, in the University of Cambridge, was judged by that learned body deserving of the prize.

Every body of men so numerous as that which contains the civil, military, and judicial servants of the Honourable East India Company, must include individuals of almost every description of character. This numerous class of British subjects, who have so successfully supported the interest and honour of their country in Asia, have, with more justice been characterised, as humane, liberal, and brave. A monthly allowance of pay, ample but not extravagant, has afforded the Honourable Company a choice of its servants, not enjoyed in the foreign settlements of any other nation. Hence in all the branches of their service are to be found many of the highest rank, and the most liberal education. The civil department, in particular, has long been an object of ambition to the younger members of the first families in Britain. This circumstance has been productive of many advantages. Men of hereditary rank and high expectations in Europe, have been found unwilling to forfeit these objects in the East, by acts either of meanness or insubordination. Their duty as magistrates, judges, and officers, has generally been discharged without that selfish and illiberal attention to small gains and pecuniary advantages which is so apt to characterise the agents of a mercantile body. They have accordingly been distinguished by acts not of mere charity only, but of munificence rarely to be found in any rank of life.

The malignant climate of India, and the uncertainty of life in a region where it is so frequently cut

off by disease, has produced among some individuals, that spirit of extravagance, which in Batavia the same cause has created among the parsimonious Dutch. This spirit, however, is more than counterbalanced by the habit of saving, monthly, a small portion of their allowances, to enable them to revisit their native country, and there to support their advanced life and declining years : a period which all are equally desirous to spend in the midst of their relations, and in the bosom of their native land.

This is by far the most universal and steady principle of action, among the servants of the India Company ; and if they are to be characterised generally by any one prevailing quality, it is by an oeconomy in their expenditure, which is sometimes seen to degenerate into parsimony. In number, the servants of the Company, are little inferior to the civil and military establishment of Great Britain ; by blood or connection they are allied to almost every family in the United Kingdom ; their savings ultimately rest there, to the annual amount of nearly two millions sterling ; and for this immense sum nothing is advanced but the expence of their early education : they have adventured on a remote and dangerous service, where they have hitherto successfully upheld the honour and the interests of their country ; the comfort and safety of such a respectable class of our countrymen forms of itself no mean inducement for attempting the moral improvement of our native subjects in India.

It

It belongs to that generosity, which has hitherto been characteristic of Britons, not merely to acquire distant possessions, but to civilize and improve them. They at the present moment command more extensive territories in Asia, Africa, and America, than ever fell under the dominion of any ancient or modern nation. It is of high importance that they feel and respect the duties of a situation, in which they are to controul the destinies of so large a portion of the human race. It is perhaps of no less importance, that the individuals entrusted with so perilous a service should be protected by the police of the country, and the moral discipline of the natives.

In circumstances to which there are attached so many arduous duties, and so much responsibility, it is consolatory to reflect, that by the very constitution of human affairs, the intercourse of nations tends almost invariably to their improvement. There is a steady progress to civilization among communities much connected together, which is often concealed from themselves, and which arises not so much from the policy of government, as from the original constitution of human nature itself. To this it is owing, that amidst all the complaints that have been made against the British government in India, so many solid, though unforeseen advantages have been mutually conferred on both countries.

From this source the Asiatics have derived the arts of printing and of ship-building, as well as the practi-

cal use of the mariners compass. If Europe has derived from the East the benefits of inoculation, the latter has received in return, the Jennerian improvement of the discovery, by which so many thousand lives are annually saved*. If we consider each of these improvements separately, it will be found to imply important changes in the condition of society. Taken together they assuredly constitute the most solid benefit that one portion of the human race has ever conferred upon another.

All these reciprocal advantages, which have accrued either to the European or Asiatic nations, it must be remarked, have arisen from no premeditated plans of improvement projected by either party: they are wholly to be ascribed to the silent, but steady operation of an intercourse that has already existed, on a limited and imperfect scale, for nearly two centuries. Had the dialect which became the medium of communication, been less rude and imperfect, or better understood, there can remain little doubt that the mutual benefit resulting from this established intercourse, would have been more considerable. But

* The British government has interfered in spreading the benefits of this discovery among the natives. Three medical gentlemen have been appointed to supply the vaccine matter, and to conciliate the natives to its application. They are fond of the cow from religious prejudices, and there is every reason to believe that the practice of vaccination will be soon universally adopted throughout the whole peninsula, and the adjoining parts of Asia.

since the languages of Asia are becoming, year after year, more familiar to Europeans, it unavoidably follows, that the communication of knowledge must in future become more rapid and extensive ; hence the improvements of the ensuing century must in all probability prove more considerable than either of the past. The Hindostanee, a kind of *lingua franka*, made up of various dialects, is the spoken language of India, and has become the key to all communication with the natives of that country. Our knowledge of its dialects has gradually increased with the intercourse which called it forth, till at last the acquisition of it has become the object of several expensive seminaries and insitutions. It is to be regretted that these subsidiary arrangements to facilitate intercourse between the Europeans and natives, have not only been too late in their introduction, but inefficient in their plan. The first adventurers in India enjoyed no assistance whatever in acquiring the language, except what their ear might afford them, as often as they attempted to converse with the natives.

It was not till after many years that a few sterile and jejune publications appeared in the form of vocabularies and grammars, and it was still later before monshees, or native teachers, were employed to instruct such individuals as might be appointed to situations requiring more than ordinary proficiency and skill in the native languages. For a series of years after their first arrival in the East, the situation

of Europeans somewhat resembled that of a handful of soldiers encamped amidst millions of strangers, or perhaps enemies, with whose hostile or friendly sentiments they had no means of becoming acquainted. The complicated functions of war, of government, or of trade, were either intrusted solely to native agency, or very awkwardly discharged.

During this sterility, or rather total want of the means of communication, the British settlers remained in a kind of insulated state, unknown to the natives, and almost entirely unacquainted with their habits and prejudices. That so few occurrences offensive to their feelings, or abhorrent to their religious ideas, should have happened, must be ascribed to a tender indulgence of their weakness, rather than to any accurate knowledge of their manners, or of their religious maxims.

The literary institution that was lately established in Calcutta, however well intended, has been found inadequate to the end proposed : It embraced too many branches of education : It contained professional chairs for Greek, Latin, Mathematics, and Chemistry, each endowed with annual salaries of some thousand pounds. It employed upwards of eighty Pundits, Molavees, and Moonshees ; a number often greater than that of the scholars. The civil servants of the three Presidencies, were compelled to attend the terms of this College during three or four successive years, at the annual expence to the

India Company of nearly a thousand pounds each individual : Hence the accumulated expenditure of the institution must have considerably exceeded one hundred thousand pounds sterling, annually. It is probable that the different seminaries established in England, may be conducted for a much smaller sum ; although they are destined to receive the whole of the military as well as civil servants of the Indian government*. The youth being there unappointed to their stations, will not be entitled to their Indian pay : a circumstance which must at once preserve their dependence on their parents and guardians, and prevent them from being plunged into habits of extravagance and dissipation. From these seminaries, it is to be hoped that in a few years there will issue a race of individuals qualified to extend the British intercourse in the East, and to communicate to the natives a more extensive knowledge of European arts than the more illiterate adventurers

* The chief of those seminaries that have hitherto been established, are at Hartford, Woolwich, Great Marlow, and High-Wycomb. The three last are intended more particularly for the military and engineer departments. Such institutions have long been universal on the continent. Their institution in Britain, at a period so much later, indicates, perhaps, too great a trust in our insular situation. If our military education be not more improved, and more generally diffused, how, it may be asked, are we in future to be opposed to the armed millions of the continent ?

who have preceded them*. In their hands, the fiscal, diplomatic, and military services, must in all cases be more ably performed, than by persons unacquainted with the languages of India: What is particularly applicable to our present view of the subject, a masterly and effective system of police will be established, affording more perfect security to European settlers, and comprehending a species of discipline for the improvement of the natives themselves.

* It is not meant to insinuate that the civil and military servants of the Company were in general ignorant of the native dialect—some of them were eminently distinguished for their great proficiency: much intercourse, in the way of business with the inhabitants, had rendered them much more useful in the diplomatic line, than any of the junior members of the college. Among these we may rank Colonel Kilpatrick; Colonel Collins, Major Malcolm, and Mr Webb.



SECTION III.

CONJECTURES CONCERNING THE FUTURE INFLUENCE OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN MODERATING THE DESPOTISM OF INDIA.

THE communities of Asia, are distinguished from those of Europe, by two remarkable circumstances; the despotism of their government, and the stationary state of their improvement. The supreme power in Hindostan, whether exercised by an Emperor, by great and independent princes, or by petty chieftains, has uniformly been maintained without any restraint or controul: Authority in that quarter of the world, even when delegated, is seldom checked, and almost never either limited or divided; hence the rulers throughout that whole peninsula, in spite of their personal character, have ever appeared before their sub-

jects, in that absolute and despotic attitude, which invariably distinguishes the governments of Asia.

The power of the sovereign, in the east, being thus unlimited, admits of no change, or adaptation to the circumstances of the people; their lot is as stationary and immutable as the principles of their government, and precludes almost every hope of their advancement through those different stages of improvement and civilization, which have distinguished each successive age in Europe, and which have so remarkably characterised all its different states.

The present condition of the Asiatic nations, strongly corroborates this statement of the nature of their governments. They are all nearly on the same level, hardly displaying any perceptible difference in the advances made by one community superior to the rest; while history fully attests, that almost the whole have remained stationary, in point of improvement, for many successive ages. Throughout the extensive range of Tartary, on the north, and the greater part of Arabia, on the east, the whole population has remained stationary, and in the pastoral state, which admits of so small advancement in the arts of life, that the same delineation which is given of the manners of these nations, in the books of Moses, is strictly applicable to them at the present hour. They still dwell in tents; migrate with immense herds of cattle;

and, being engaged in continual hostility with surrounding tribes, they sell the vanquished as slaves.

In the middle and southern regions of Asia, comprehending Persia, India and China, great communities have long existed in the agricultural state. This condition, inviting to a more correct and extensive knowledge of the complicated subject of property, has diffused considerable shades of intellectual improvement, and perhaps greater plenty, as well as domestic comfort through their society ; still, however, both the principle and spirit of Asiatic government, among all these nations, remains invariably the same. It is that of a stern and unrelenting despotism, which, without affording protection or security to the body of the people, is powerful only in chaining it down in a state of torpor and depression, wholly incompatible with all the higher advances on the great scale of human improvement, to which a more propitious destiny has raised the European nations.

None of the Asiatic communities has ever arisen to the character of a commercial people, nor aspired to the rank of a maritime power. They, as well as the European nations, have been, at different times, vanquished by warlike tribes from the north ; who have not only destroyed their property, but severely checked their improvement : From these disasters, however, the former have arisen, with renovated energy and greater lustre ; while the latter have re-

mained on their old semibarbarous level, but a few steps removed from the primæval condition of our race; and greatly below that standard of wealth, knowledge, and happiness, which has been attained in the western quarter of the globe.

The modern theory, therefore, regarding the progress of society, from its rude to a civilised state, seems to bear only a feeble and remote application to any Asiatic government. It was first sketched by Montesquieu, and was afterwards copied, misunderstood, or improved by a crowd of speculative politicians, who succeeded him in the western world. The progress of nations through the different steps of the civil union, has been distinguished by these sages into four separate gradations, implying various degrees of improvement and cultivation. The first, is that in which men, yet rude, and feebly associated, wander through the forests and wilds, subsisting on the precarious supplies of the chase or the rivers; the second, is that in which they are occupied with pastoral cares; the third, with those of agricultural labour; the fourth and last is that in which they are employed in commercial speculations.

This system, which would refer all the laws and institutions of nations, to that particular stage which they may chance to occupy on the grand scale of improvement, is perhaps more fanciful than just; rather methodical, than satisfactory. By representing

the improvement of civil society as uniformly progressive, it affords no explanation of the causes which so long detained almost the whole American tribes in the first, or savage state ; nor does it point out the means by which two only of these communities, (those of Mexico and Peru), were enabled by feeble and hesitating steps, to approach the agricultural stage of civil union ; and least of all does it account for that insurmountable bar which, for so many thousand years, has detained the whole northern tribes of Asia in the pastoral state ; and for those impediments which have prevented all the more opulent agricultural nations of that continent from emerging to the rank of commercial states.

A late writer of great acuteness and sagacity* has ascribed the stationary and semibarbarous condition of all these Asiatic nations, to the state of landed property in that quarter of the world. Throughout Hindostan, in particular, the prince is every where the absolute proprietor of the soil. In that vast country no great landholders ever existed, whose combinations might resist or controul the prerogatives of royalty ; in Europe, on the contrary, the history of almost every state exhibits a constant and unremitting struggle between the sovereign and the great proprietors ; each of these parties is there seen, either carefully watching or vigorously repelling the

* Paton on the principles of Asiatic Monarchies.

from which there is no dissent from any quarter, induced the most respectable European travellers to concur with one assent, that the Emperor was the sole executive proprietor : Such is the testimony given by Bernier, Manuchi, Thevenot, Chardin, Tavernier, and others who visited Hindostan nearly at the same time, and met together at Court during the reign of Aurungzebe. The perpetuity of the leases held by the ryuts, (if they at all adverted to this circumstance,) did not prevent them from forming this conclusion ; leasehold property, even in Europe, being deemed perfectly compatible with the superior and absolute rights of the proprietor.

2. In every commentary or digest of Hindoo laws that has yet been published, the king is declared to be the lord and proprietor of the soil. Much of sophistry, and, perhaps, still more of mythological jargon, is to be found in these venerated volumes ; there is, however, nothing to controvert this general proposition, except the wild pretensions of the Brahmans to be “ incarnations of the Deity, and lords of the whole creation.”

3. Almost all the natives of distinction, both under the British government, and under the native princes, that have been employed in public functions, and therefore well acquainted with the practical application of the maxims of Hindoo law, have uniformly answered the enquiries made to them on this

subject, by declaring the king to be the absolute proprietor of all the lands in his dominions.

4. Some grants of land, to favoured individuals, are still in existence, and being universally deemed authentic, add the strongest and most direct proof of this fact: two of these grants are preserved in the *Asiatic Researches**, in a translation from Sanscreeet engravings upon two metal plates. The first was found in the earth at Tanna, the capital of Salset, and the second at the fort of Mongheer in Behar, and seems to convey a grant of land, from a king or Rajah, for religious purposes: It strongly inculcates the merit of bestowing land in this manner; and, at the same time, denounces vengeance against those kings who may resume it, or who take back the property that had been dedicated to religion, or religious men; implying clearly, though indirectly, that this power had sometimes been exercised by kings—"Exalted sovereigns" it proceeds, "have given land: This is the true bridge of justice for sovereigns. From time to time, O kings! that bridge must be repaired by you. He who seizes land given by himself, or by another, (sovereign), will rot among worms, himself a worm, in the midst of ordure."

The other of these deeds is entitled, "a Royal Grant of land, engraved on copper, and found among

* Volume II.

the ruins at Mongheer." It is translated by Mr Wilkins, and from upwards of five pages of mythological jargon, the following passage is transcribed, as conveying direct proof of the proprietary right of the sovereign. "Be it known, that I have given the above mentioned town of Maseeka, whose limits include the fields where the cattle graze, above and below the surface, with all the lands belonging to it, together with all the Mango and Madhoo trees; all its waters, with all their banks and verdure; all its rents and tolls; with all fines for crimes, and rewards for catching thieves."

This paragraph is the more entitled to notice, as it seems to contain a pretty exact enumeration of the revenues and advantages that, in India, are always attached to the absolute property of land.

It is not meant to deny by this statement of the proofs of the sovereign's property, that the ryuts or cultivators of the soil had no interest in the lands. They enjoyed the *possessory* right, which was not only alienable, but hereditary. This right of occupancy was, however, in all cases, conditional, and perfectly compatible with the absolute property of the king: It was held by the ryuts in small portions, consisting each from ten to thirty acres of our measurement, and by a lease termed Pottah, on the invariable condition of paying a stipulated rent, either in money or grain, amounting in quantity to various proportions, sometimes to one half of the whole pro-

duce of the land. This rent constitutes, over all India, the revenue of the sovereign: it is realised and collected for the treasury in each district, by a numerous class of official agents, under the general denomination of Zemindars. These officers consist of various classes and gradations: at different times, and according to the extent of their trust, they have been named crories, zemindars, aumils, choudries, canongoes, &c. and were appointed by a deed of the sovereign (Sunnud); which minutely described their duties, and the mode in which they were to be discharged.

The office of zemindar, as well as many others of Hindoo appointment, became hereditary, or, more strictly speaking, was renewed to the lineal descendants; yet, in all cases, this appointment, or zemindary sunnud, was necessary before the new incumbent could enter upon his office. This circumstance, together with the name zemindar or landholder, given to this office, has led several writers (partially acquainted with the subject of Asiatic finance) to contend that the zemindar was the real landholder of India, with the whole train of adjuncts attached to that character in Europe. There is, however, no fact more compleatly established, than the official nature of the zemindar's appointment: He is an officer of revenue, and his duties extend to the management of customs and excise, and to the maintenance of the police of his district, as well as to the collection of the land rents. For all these intromis-

sions, he was strictly accountable to government, by whom he was appointed, with a definite salary for his maintenance, amounting, in ordinary cases, to a tenth part of the sum arising from his collections*.

Besides the zemindars, in India there is but one remaining class of officers who could possibly be supposed to form any check or controul to the sovereign authority ;—that is, the class of Jaghierdars. If a district is conferred on an individual for the purpose of military defence ; and on the express condition of maintaining a certain number of troops already raised, it is, in the language of India, termed a *jaghier*. This, however, could by no means be regarded as a private property, or as a source of permanent power or emolument to the individual on whom the grant was conferred : It was a public trust, and during all the more vigorous and healthful periods of the imperial government, such grants were always resumeable at pleasure, or granted only during life ; for, in every case, whether the son or a relative succeeded to the jaghier, a renewal of the grant seems to have been an essential preliminary to the discharge of any duty, in the district thus conferred.

* Vide 'Translation of a Firmaun concerning the collection of tribute, issued by the emperor Aurungzêbe, in A. H. 1079, or A. D. 1668.

It will readily be granted, that there exists in Hindostan several examples of other deeds and tenures by which lands were held: such was that denominated *Altumgha**, by which land was conveyed by the sovereign, in perpetuity, to a distinguished and highly favoured individual; but this, as well as the talookdarry grant, was so seldom bestowed, and in such limited portions, that nothing resembling a wealthy or independent class of landholders ever existed in India. There the body of the ryuts alone, however humble their condition, or limited in their circumstances, from the smallness of their individual possessions, have always been regarded as the immediate hereditary tenants of the crown. The rents are collected from them, and paid into the treasury by zemindars, each entrusted with a district of greater or smaller extent, according to local convenience. The lands so allotted to the collector as the sphere of his official duty, were so far from being his individual property, that a small portion, termed *nankar* was set apart for his maintenance, and this formed always a part, sometimes the whole of his salary, which was strictly limited to ten per cent. on the amount of his collections.

Nothing, therefore, in the whole train of military and civil officers, that numerous body which upheld

* This grant conveyed real hereditary property, on which no zemindar collected rent; but it occurs so seldom, that one example of such a grant to a fakeer, is the only instance to be found during the early part of the Mahomedan government.

judgement in the treatment of the cultivators ; “ because,” according to the words of Tamerlane himself, “ the ruin of the subject causeth a diminution “ of the imperial treasures.” The same scrupulous regard to the protection of the ryot pervades the *Ayeen Akbery*, the next authoritative publication on Indian finance, as translated by Mr Gladwin. Self-interest and necessity might dictate these wise regulations, as well as tenderness to the subject ; for the rents of the land were the revenues of the state, and these flowed entirely from the cultivators, whose prosperity was therefore essential to the supply of the government.

Unfortunately, it was in *practice* rather than in *theory*, that the Eastern despotisms were deficient in affording protection to the people. The general regulations might be excellent, while their whole virtue and spirit was lost, from the want of an efficient controul to enforce their practical observance. That absolute power over every department of government, which centered in the sovereign, was not divided or portioned out to delegates, who might check the abuses which were constantly springing up, in particular departments. The idea of a monarch personally hearing and reviewing the judicial causes of an empire so extensive as that of Hindostan, is too absurd to bear examination. The Mogul emperors attempted this, though constantly surrounded with a croud of flatterers, and intoxicated with every kind of dissipation. Their sentence, which was held up

as the dictates of unerring wisdom, could neither be founded on deliberate investigation, nor upon sound principles of law. What M. Volney remarks concerning the succession of subordinate officers in Turkey, is not inapplicable to the Indian despotisms: "each of these officers is the exact image of his next superior: it is still the Sultan who commands," and his sentence is the fiat of a despot, without any reference to the merits of the case, or to the maxims of law. It is true, that in every village, or zemindary district, there was always an officer of controul, whose duty it was to protect the ryuts from the exactions of the collectors: Two of these, the Canongo and Karkun, signed the zemindar's accounts, and possessed, along with him, the joint management of the treasure, when collected. In practice, however, it has almost always been found, that these officers, instead of forming any effectual controul on the conduct of the zemindar, encouraged his exactions, by collusion, in order that they might participate in the gains of a system of spoliation, which had become too general to be marked with infamy.

During the whole period of the decline and fall of the Mogul Empire, every successive shock which its power sustained, was attended with a concomitant share of relaxation in discipline, and with a fresh train of abuses in the executive government. These abuses were always most conspicuous in the revenue department; not merely from the circumstance of avarice and fraud being the most prominent defects

in the native character, but from the vast number of individuals which it was necessary to employ in collecting a sum of upwards of thirty millions, made up of small payments of a few rupees twice in the year from each cultivator. Neither the abuses prevalent in this system, nor the means adopted for removing them, can be so easily understood, as by perusing the instructions that were drawn up for the guidance of the British agents who first attempted to reform the finances of Bengal. They were dictated by Mr Verelst, so early as 1769; and it is remarkable that, though only thirteen years had then elapsed since the conquest of that province, no document has appeared more profound, judicious, and precise, upon that subject.

By these instructions, each supervisor is directed to form a minute and particular rent-roll (*hustabood*) of the district allotted to his inspection. In doing this, he is cautioned not to trust to the general rent-roll of the *zemindar*, deposited in his own *cutcherry*, which is formed for the express purpose of disguising his fraudulent views, and filled with statements calculated to tally with his offers to government and his public accounts. He is therefore directed to a local investigation of the state of all the lands in the district; to ascertain their actual rents, by personally visiting each subordinate division; and by examining the rent-rolls of the smaller collectors, down to the most inconsiderable *cutcherry*. Thus they were enabled to procure a list of the leases granted

to each ryut, as well as the quantity of land contained in his possession, and the real amount of the rent with which it was charged.

By this proceeding, the supervisors ascertained how far the rent-rolls given in by the greater zemindars were correct, and how far they might differ from those of the lesser aumils which were included in them. From all these precautions, it was easy to detect what portion of the lands and rents had been abstracted from the general account presented to government of the larger collections. All such lands as were clearly proved to be illegally dismembered and abstracted from the roll, were ordered to be re-annexed, and were resumed by government.—To prevent all collusion between the zemindars and their agents, and to frustrate all endeavours to evade this enquiry, every one of them was compelled to shew his records and titles under the penalty of forfeiting his appointment: And that they might not be aided in concealment by the ryuts, they were impressed with a strong belief that the whole measure was meant for their benefit; and that all opposition on their part, would only rivet more strongly the chains of their servitude.

But, besides those sums which the zemindar illegally acquired by partial rent-rolls, and by secreting the lands and rents, he had always a certain portion of them allowed him for subsistence, for which he paid no rent. These districts were termed *Nankar*,

from this circumstance ; and were granted by government, to simplify into one transaction the payment of officers' salaries, and the collection of revenue. Thus the Jaghierdar was paid in land for whatever number of troops he had engaged to maintain : Thus also the zemindar had one spot allotted him for rice, another for pasture, and a particular tank allowed for fish and water.

These different grants, allowed originally for family support, had all been abused ; and, by various encroachments, sometimes on the property of ryots, and sometimes on that of government, they had been enlarged to an extent far beyond their original intention. Many other indefinite claims and perquisites, equally hostile to the interests of the cultivators, were directed either to be totally abolished, or to be reduced to a moderate amount. These assessments, under the general name of *Nuzzuranna*, consisted of provisions and money, which the zemindar and his attendants claimed during their progress through the country on their official duty. Custom, and perhaps the necessity of the case, had authorised some of these contributions from the inhabitants, but their retrenchment was strictly enjoined, in all cases where the avarice of the collector had increased them beyond the necessary quantity.

The power of imposing arbitrary fines was directed to be totally abolished, as a source of indefinite abuse, and an inlet to rapacity ; so also was that pernicious

authority, still claimed in some parts of Europe, by which the proprietor imposes gratuitous labour on his tenants. Thus the zemindars had compelled the ryuts to desist from the necessary labour upon their own lands, and to attend to the arbitrary commands of an aumil, who at the same time forced from them, under the name of presents, various contributions, so far beyond his necessary consumption, that they were sold by his dependents. Such are a few of the numerous abuses which the farmer suffered in his own district; but they were far surpassed by the exactions which were imposed at the markets, and at the ghants and passes as he proceeded to dispose of his surplus produce, and convert it into money. And even after that object was attained, his grievances did not cease; for, as the rupees or specie was of various kinds, they were received at an arbitrary exchange; and the discount or *batta* became a new perquisite of the collector. This numerous train of vexations, the British agents were directed to abolish, and to reduce the zemindar's emoluments to a reasonable compensation for fulfilling the duties of his office.

By far the greater portion of the lands in India were consigned to the management of zemindars, whose conduct influenced the happiness of the ordinary class of ryuts.—Their malversations accordingly constituted the first and leading object of British reform: But the revenue system had been completely deranged in all its parts; and could not be

restored without adverting to the state of several other descriptions of land. The Talooks, Jaghiers, and charitable or religious donations, were recommended to the attention of the supravisors.

The Talooks were constituted by uniting several pot-tah holdings into one individual property, which was done either by purchase, or by a grant from government. The Talookdar on receiving this was exempted from the zemindary jurisdiction, and paid the rents of his Talook immediately into the treasury; his tenants were taxed more sparingly, and treated with so much tenderness and indulgence, in comparison with the general mass of the peasantry, that these properties generally swarmed with inhabitants, while the zemindary districts were deserted. The Talookdar, aware that his consequence and wealth would increase according to the number of his tenants, held out every incitement to augment the concourse to his lands : and in this object he was almost invariably successful, because powerfully seconded by the natural desire of the peasantry to exchange from a worse to a better situation. Another object of policy, the Talookdar pursued with similar steadiness and success, was to watch for a season when the government was weakened by faction, or busied in other affairs, and to make encroachments and additions to his property. Thus both the number and extent of Talooks was greatly increased ; and large tracts beyond the original grants were occupied by a privileged peasantry who bore no equal share

in the general taxation ; and the revenues absorbed by a few wealthy proprietors, who could advance no claim to these peculiar advantages, except that of having sacrificed their integrity to their avarice.

The Jaghiers, as well as the Talooks, had originally been intended as rewards to particular persons : They were gifts of the crown, confirmed by the Nizam, and expirable with life, but sometimes made hereditary. They were liable to the same objection with the Talooks, that of producing invidious distinction of favourites, and sacrificing the general good to the interests of a few. In order as much as possible to remove these distinctions, and lighten the burdens upon the whole, by making it fall equally and impartially on each individual, the British agents were instructed to enforce a surrender of all lands unlawfully possessed ; and to discover them, they were enjoined to make a thorough investigation of these grants and tenures, all of which were to be produced, examined, and registrated at limited times under the penalty of forfeiture. The *coss*, *comar*, and *waste* lands, which were without tenants, were directed to be let on such favourable terms, as might invite ryots to their cultivation.

Such are a few outlines of the precise and accurate instructions which were drawn up for the guidance of the British agents, on their first entering upon the arduous task of regulating and reforming the system of Indian finance : They indicate a knowledge of

the abuses that prevailed, at once minute and profound. It would be equally difficult and foreign to the purpose of this sketch to specify the particular instances in which these labours of our countrymen failed in the objects proposed, or were exercised with success. The general peace and prosperity that has prevailed through the provinces of Bengal, during a period far longer than any recorded in their history, affords a satisfactory proof that considerable reformatations have been effected. That the population and revenues of Bengal have continued gradually and steadily to encrease, is a fact uniformly stated in the annual accounts transmitted from the country. If the effects of the British government in that quarter of the world are to be illustrated by this sort of arithmetical calculation, they perhaps will receive a more satisfactory eulogy than can possibly be derived from the fallacious sources of individual opinion.

It would, however, be bold to assert, that the multiplied and inveterate abuses of Indian finance were, by these efforts abolished from the system : much has been already accomplished, but far more yet remains to be effected : many lurking sources of oppression are yet undisclosed ; and there are millions of acres still unreclaimed in the vast wilds even of Bengal itself. A new aera will probably be formed in these provinces, by the operation of the permanent settlement, technically denominated *the mocurrery* system. This agreement was meant to confer upon the zemindars, and other occupiers of land, a perpe-

tual interest, each in his own district, at the same rate of taxation which was then established : The arrangement originated with the British government, which by this act divested itself of all right to impose any new or additional assessment on the lands, either of the zemindar or cultivator : consequently every additional acre which might thereafter be cultivated, yielded a new produce entirely their own. The zemindar's rights were now proprietary, whereas formerly they had been official ; the powerful principle of self-interest was by this means brought into action ; the desire of bettering their condition, that master-spring of all human improvement, was thus awakened ; and the unambitious natives, were now stimulated by that powerful principle, which Malthus has aptly enough denominated the *vis medicatrix reipublicae*.

This permanent settlement, which first invested the zemindars with the property of their districts, whatever are its dangers or its merits, is to be ascribed to the Marquis Cornwallis, aided by the councils of Lord Teignmouth. The importance of the arrangement was immediately felt, by every class connected with the government of India : the civil servants, were most immediately interested, and they soon arranged themselves into two parties of a grand schism, containing the opposers and abettors of this measure. The latter contended that the zemindars had been always proprietors, and that they were therefore entitled to the advantages of the settlement

as a matter of right. Sir C. Broughton Rouse, in his dissertation on the state of landed property in Bengal, stands foremost on the list of the numerous advocates of the proprietary rights of the zemindars : While Mr Grant, the author of an inquiry into the nature of zemindary tenures, may be regarded as a leader of the adverse party. In consequence of this discussion thus occasioned, there is perhaps no proposition more compleatly proved than the official nature of the zemindar's appointment. The sunnud expressly declares it to be an *office*, (Kidmut), and the very work intended to establish the proprietary claims of this officer, incontestably proves the opposite doctrine*.

If the advocates of the permanent settlement have compleatly failed in defending it, upon the untenable grounds they have chosen ; its opposers, with perhaps much greater talents, seem to have been equally

* Dissertation on the nature of landed property in Bengal, by Sir C. Broughton Rouse, Appendix page 277. has furnished compleat evidence against the whole chain of argument contained in the rest of the work. It flows inadvertently from the answers which are given by the principal Hindoo officers under the English government, to certain questions proposed to them. Maha Raja Bullub, the roy-royan, commences his reply to certain queries put to him in the following words : " The proprietor, or lord of the soil is the Emperor ; zemindars and choudries are written as *officers*, and depend, conditionally, on the carrying on the improvement and cultivation of the land, and discharging the revenues of government."

inconsistent. Mr Paton, by far the most intelligent writer on this subject, and the avowed opposer of the proprietary claims of the zemindars, thus argues the case: "The specific remedy against that sort of tyranny which proceeds from the despotism of one arbitrary ruler, has at all times been the influence and power of an aristocracy; and in those countries where that tyranny has continued for ages without abatement or controul, the accumulation of landed property, by individuals, will be found to have been systematically prevented. In Europe, all the checks which were imposed on the different monarchies, proceeded from the exertions of the great land proprietors; who, when they were prevented from becoming tyrants themselves, (to which they were violently prone and addicted), eventually became the restorers and conservators of *general liberty*. Yet I think it may be doubted, how far it is politic in the English East India Company, or rather in the government of England, who now possess the Sovereign power of India, to transform their own native official servants in that country, to enormous land-proprietors, holding principalities rather than estates, and give up the whole cultivators of the soil, their own immediate socage tenants, to the arbitrary sway of such local tyrants."

It must be granted that the permanent settlement, by conferring the property of their districts upon the zemindars, has invested a considerable number of them with immense estates. The zemindary of Ra-

jeshahy is said to contain no less than sixteen thousand villages, upon an area consisting of upwards of six millions of acres. Mr Paton, however, on his own system, should be the last person who could object to this arrangement of property, since, according to him, it is the specific remedy "at all times against that sort of tyranny which proceeds from the despotism of one arbitrary ruler." Now this is precisely the species of tyranny which he allows has continued in India for ages "without abatement or controul;" and which he admits, at the same time, to be occasioned by the absence of great and hereditary proprietors of land.

But if the India government, after the downfall of the native princes, has become the absolute proprietor of all the lands of that country, as these princes most unquestionably were, where is the check to the exercise of that despotic power which all admit to be a necessary result of such vast property? Where are we to look for any efficient controul of that tyranny which Mr Paton himself admits to have invariably perpetuated the barbarism of Asia? One would have naturally expected from this author, an eulogium on the magnanimity of that government which contrived a balance to the future exercise of its own power: and which generously raised up an order of men capable of softening the rigours of its own unqualified despotism. That liberty, however, which Mr Paton reverences in Europe, he reprobates as dangerous in India; and that individual property

which he venerates in the west, as the precious remains of the free institutions of Imperial Rome, terrifies him in Asia, as the ghost of Pompey is said to have done his rival in power.

Whether the Marquis Cornwallis foresaw the important effects that might result from the permanent settlement may justly be questioned ; but no doubt has ever been entertained, either of the uprightness of his intentions, or of the benevolence of his motives ; it is probable that his views in making the arrangement were limited to the removal of that general poverty and indolence which he saw so universally prevalent in the country ; and that he imagined the boon of an independent property, which their own industry might increase, was the best means possible of at once stimulating and rewarding exertion among the most useful class of all, the cultivators of the soil. His conduct, in the heat of party disputes, has been arraigned, as an attempt to revolutionise India ; to create petty sovereigns independent of their masters ; and to encourage treason and rebellion among the whole body of zemindars.

If the zemindars are to be considered as proprietors, in any sense, it is insinuated “ that they will combine for the assertion of the complete and absolute proprietary right ; that they will very soon of themselves, make the discovery, that the English East India Company can have no just right to levy from them nine-tenths of the rents of their private

estates. This enormous assessment from private proprietors, they will certainly regard as too high a price to be paid for government protection ; and the wealth that would flow from a ten-fold multiplication of what they are permitted to receive, they may be led to imagine, will enable them to protect themselves especially if a few of those great proprietors of thousands of square miles of cultivated land, with innumerable inhabitants, should determine to combine together for that purpose."

Mr Peter More, in a speech delivered in the Court of Proprietors*, adverted with great eloquence and ability to the dangers arising from this source, especially in the larger zemindaries,—such as Burdwan, Rajeshahy, and others. In the former of these districts, he asserts, that even a female representative is now rearing her head amidst the horde of conspirators, after long having kept you in ignorance of the conditions of these valuable districts ; and having for years kept back as much of your dues as possible, this woman is now resolved, if conspiracy assist her, that you shall have none at all ;—no, not an existence in the country."

Of Rajeshahy, he observes ; " This zemindary, likewise held by a woman, the Ranny Bowanny, who determined that you should obtain none of those ad-

* This court was held in Nov. 13, 1799.

vantages to which you are entitled by the custom of the empire, the lapse of time, and the course of nature ; and, as if to shew the absurdity of those zemindary titles, about which I observe party delusion has run so wild,—this woman adopted a menial, or a slave of her household, of the name of Ramkissen, and obtained for him the title of Rajah, that he might succeed her : Succeed to what?—to the succession and management of your privileges ; and to the joint rights of the British nation, over a principality containing upwards of six millions of acres of land.—And, I doubt not, when the exterminating plot shall be farther developed, we shall find these names, even the adopted Ramkissen himself, among the list of conspirators for the same laudable purpose.”

This speech, delivered with that uncommon eloquence of which this orator is master, was heard with great applause, and ordered to be published. Happily, however, for the Honourable Company, and the interests of humanity, the *horrid plots and conspiracies*, thus anticipated, have only been *heard of* at the India-House, where they may long contribute to adorn the speeches of the proprietors, without disturbing the tranquillity of the state. It has ever been among the independent or half-subjected princes of India, and not among the zemindars, that schemes of war and rebellion have originated : no general plan of revolt or insubordination has yet been disclosed among the latter class of inhabitants ; while

the perpetual settlement, amidst so many dreadful predictions regarding its effects, has maintained its ground in quietness for upwards of twelve years, and experience has already begun to impress it with the seal of approbation.

One objection to this arrangement was early foreseen, even by the projectors of it themselves ; it was, that the settlement, while it confers a perpetual property on the zemindars, seems to afford no sufficient check to their exactions from the ryuts, the actual cultivators of their districts. This numerous and useful body of men, has always remained in a condition the most degraded and oppressed of all the classes : They possess a hereditary right of occupancy in the soil ; but the proprietary claim allowed to the zemindar, seems to infer that he has a right to raise the rents of his cultivators. This difficulty had been stated by Lord Teignmouth, and drew the following reply to his minute from the Marquis Cornwallis :—

“ If Mr Shore means, after having declared the zemindar proprietor of the soil, in order to be consistent, we have no right to prevent his imposing new *abooabs*, or taxes, on the lands in cultivation, I must differ from him in opinion. Unless we suppose the ryuts to be the absolute slaves of the zemindars, every begah of land possessed by them, must have been cultivated under an express or implied agreement, that a certain sum should be paid for each begah,

of produce and no more. Every *abooab* or tax, imposed by a zemindar over and above that sum, is not only a breach of that agreement, but a direct violation of the established laws of the country. The cultivator, therefore, has, in such case, an undoubted right to apply to government for the protection of his property; and government is at all times bound to afford him redress. I do not hesitate, therefore, to give it as my opinion, that the zemindar, neither now, nor ever could possess a right to impose taxes or abooabs on the ryuts; and if, from the confusion that prevailed towards the close of the Mogul government, or from neglect, or want of information, since we had possession of the country, new abooabs have been imposed by the zemindars; that government have an undoubted right to abolish such as are oppressive, and have never been confirmed by a competent authority, and to establish such regulations as may prevent the practice of such abuses in future."

It appears, therefore, that the framers of this remarkable settlement, fully intended that every individual ryut should possess a perpetual right to that spot of land which he cultivates, on payment of the revenue assessed on it; and that no encrease of this assessment should ever be imposed by any zemindar; and, farther, it is manifest that the respective rights of these two parties, the zemindar and ryut, should remain under the protection of government, and the courts of law, in an equal state of permanence and

validity. The judicial establishment of India, must therefore form, as it always ought to have formed, the grand bulwark, in support of the rights of all the classes: The number, integrity, and accessibility of its courts, must more especially prove the security of that numerous and highly useful body of men, the cultivators of the soil.

SECTION IV.

COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE, AS EXECUTED BY BRITISH AND NA- TIVE AGENTS.

THE necessity of a vigorous and impartial exercise of the judicial power being admitted, as essentially requisite to the practical ends of good government, it remains to enquire, how far the establishments already formed by the British, have ameliorated the condition of the great body of native population; and to examine whether they are calculated to promote its future comfort and security.

The high respect, and liberal emoluments, that have hitherto been attached to the civil service of the India Company, have generally supplied all its departments, but more especially the revenue

and judicial, with persons of good education, of some family, and considerable rank. The younger branches of several noble families, have solicited appointments in this service; and discharged them with equal credit to their probity and talents. In general, and viewed as a collective body, neither their accomplishments nor integrity can be compared with that of the corrupt and illiterate *cazies* in the native courts, without offering an insult to their respectability. One of these civil officers is appointed to each district as a judge; assisted by a register and clerks, he hears and determines all provincial causes in the first resort; and, happily for the litigants, his decision must be pronounced in open court, and agreeable to evidence publicly delivered. The whole of his proceedings are not only open to the revision of the judges of circuit, but to the supreme court; and his whole conduct is exposed to the eye of the government, with whom rests his future promotion in the service. The probity and justice of men in such circumstances, can hardly be said to rest in their personal character, but is rather enforced by the publicity of the situation, and the responsibility of their circumstances.

That the natives expect just and equitable decisions from these civil guardians of their property and rights, is pretty evident from their proneness to litigation, and their impatience of whatever they conceive to be the smallest injury. Matters of importance, and, in general, all causes in the *dernier* resort,

are submitted to the supreme courts, at each of the presidencies ; who enjoy the peculiar felicity of hardly ever having been suspected of undue partiality. It is not pretended, however, by this representation, to assert that all the petty differences of millions of litigious inhabitants, can be decided by the few Europeans in the remote quarters of a great empire : in spite of that kind of gratuitous authority which is conferred on each individual, by the natives around him, there, perhaps, remain an infinitude of lesser grievances, which cannot be communicated to any European ear, and must therefore remain for the arbitration of the natives themselves.

When it is asserted that the police of the native governments, and the whole system of their judicial establishments is corrupt and defective, it is not meant that this fact should rest on general averments : Every step the traveller advances, actual proof of the assertion presents itself ; he must every where meet the *corpus delicti* in a substantive form. Beyond the limits of European jurisdiction, you can no where pass without almost daily beholding some marauding parties engaged in acts of plunder, robbery, or assassination ; and, to a European, the punishment of these enormities might appear almost equally lawless and irregular with their commission. The culprit, on suspicion, is hurried away before the *aumildar*, and after a few loose questions regarding his criminality, (perhaps without even the semblance of a trial,) he is mutilated, trode with elephants, or be-

headed; not so much to satisfy justice, as to appease the vengeance of an infuriated chieftain, on his progress through the country, with an armed rabble, who assist him to monopolise, in his own person, the trade of rapine and oppression.

The appropriate titles of *great robber*, and *great thief*, which some of the African despots have assumed as a peculiar epithet to mark their dignity, might, with almost equal propriety, be claimed by many of the Indian princes.

If civil suits were not conducted with equal violence, their decision falls little short of the criminal cases in real iniquity.—The rule of decision most frequently adopted was custom, or precedent (*mamool*;) for the loose shreds from the vedahs or from the Coran, which might seem applicable, could seldom be collected by an illiterate pundit or cazy. The universal practice of offering presents and bribes to the judges, is full proof of their inaccuracy or infidelity in applying the authority of precedent to any particular case. In every new territory, added to the British dominions, those unpromising materials were the only elements remaining for the formation of a new fiscal and judicial system. The circumstances of almost the whole of our late acquisitions, were in a similar state of derangement, and the expedients to restore them to order, bear, therefore, a considerable resemblance. I have selected as an illustration of them, the example of Mysore—be-

cause the conquest of that country was more complete, and the effects of a British administration are, perhaps, more discernible there, than in some other districts: it has, besides, the advantage of being more ably detailed in the report of Major Wilks, the acting resident, than the management of almost any portion of our Indian empire.

The conquest of Seringapatam, under the auspices of the Marquis Wellesley, had the effect of restoring to the ancient family of Rajahs, the greater part of their dominions in Mysore. Though the usurpation of Hyder Ally and his son Tippoo, had continued forty years, the same princess who had been de-throned, was still surviving at the conquest, and has been constituted a regent, on the restoration, during the minority of her son. The policy of the ancient rajahs of Mysore, had constantly been directed to the reduction of the different poligar chiefs to a state of dependence: Hyder Ally pursued the same plan; and, towards the close of his reign, had nearly completed the task of reducing their direct authority. "Such of them," continues Major Wilks, "as consented to the payment of a moderate tribute, (peish-cush) and performed their military services with fidelity, were permitted to retain the exercise of the police, and of the civil government within their respective pollams:" But such as made a determined resistance to his power, were reduced, and their lands annexed to his government. It was chiefly in the latter mode, that Hyder reduced most of the great poligars

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with his territories, to a kind of obedience ;—pre-
cious, of course, from the habits of these people ;
and always liable to interruption from any con-
siderable reduction of the troops which he was forced
to maintain in those districts.

Tippoo Sultaun, with a greater share of violence,
but with less patience and consistency in his plans,
imagined, soon after the commencement of his reign,
that he had compleated the reduction of all the poli-
gars. Aumils were therefore appointed to manage
their jurisdiction : but during that complicated system
of fraud and malversation, which grew out of the bi-
gotry and gross barbarism of his government, many
of the pollams, which were represented at court as un-
der its immediate jurisdiction, were in reality held by
the poligars, from fear, fraud, or collusion, on the part
of his officers. On the establishment of the present
government, arranged by commissioners, and con-
ducted under the inspection of a British resident,
there was almost in every district, one or more clai-
mants to hereditary jurisdiction : The officers of the
police, and even the civil magistrates, emulated the
poligar character ; and claimed not only indepen-
dent jurisdiction, but the privilege of encroaching on
their neighbours. The zemindars, faithful only to
their ancient system of corruption, permitted every
ryut, who could afford a bribe, to make a false entry,
in the books of the district, of the quantity of land
for which he paid a rent. A few of these officers of
better principles, attempted to correct this last a-

buse ; but the frequent, and latterly the systematic assassination of such reformers, terrified their successors : Such efforts were, therefore, feeble and ineffectual, and tended rather to confirm than eradicate, that base reciprocation of licentiousness on the one part, and corruption on the other, which had been thus rivetted in the system.. When to these circumstances we add the turbulent character of the Mahommedan officers who had all lost their lucrative appointments under the late government, the task of forming a new and efficient administration in the territories of Mysore, must appear one of no ordinary difficulty. Its early and successful accomplishment affords an evidence of the talents and energy of those uncommon men who were selected for this duty, as surprising to those acquainted with the subject, as it must have been satisfactory to the government who employed them *.

The commissioners seem peculiarly fortunate in the choice of Poorniah as dewan, a native, who, to furnish a mind of uncommon vigour, added a most extensive acquaintance with the resources of the country, acquired during his administration of finance under Tippoo Sultaun.

The first of the measures adopted was highly popular, as well as happily chosen to quiet the alarms

* The commissioners for settling the government of Mysore, were Mr Webbe, Col. Close, and Lieut Col. Malcom.

of a newly conquered country: A proclamation was issued, remitting all balances of revenue, and establishing the ancient Hindoo rate of assessment, so acceptable to a great majority of the population. The grand desideratum in the settlement of all former conquests in India, was to find a proper employment for the vast body of irregular troops: many thousands of these had been employed by the ancient rajahs of Mysore, and afterwards by Hyder and his son. Their predatory habits were so inveterate and dangerous, that it was necessary, either to restrain them by the immediate presence of a large military force; or, by proper employment, to make them feel an interest in the stability of the government. The last of these expedients was adopted by Poorniah without hesitation; and upwards of twenty thousand were entertained during the two first years.—Their duty was to take an easy turn of service in forts and villages to which they were attached; and where they were paid half in money and half in land, to the monthly amount of three rupees. This rate of pay was doubled as often as they were called away from their districts, to assist the officers, either of revenue or police; and, although its annual amount forms no less a sum than 225,000 canterai pagodas, the expence is more than balanced by the advantages of the measure; for it is certain that, in the existing circumstances of the Mysore, every expedient for its settlement must have proved fruitless without the aid of this grand preliminary arrangement.



By means of this establishment of peons, a police has been organised throughout the country, not inferior in vigour and energy to any established in India; and without such a police no reform could be attempted of any abuse whatever. It enables government, on any emergency, to assemble a large and well affected military force at a few days notice: and to this circumstance is owing that tranquillity over the whole country, which has never once been interrupted during the five years since the establishment of the new government. Hardly any number of regular troops could have maintained this tranquillity, had this body of peons been allowed to remain idle and disaffected in the country. Nor has the maintenance of this corps been productive merely of negative advantages; for, during the latter part of the reign of Tippoo, the system of private depredation had been so completely organised, that a portion of the corps was uniformly paid by the ryuts as the price of their exemption from plunder. This powerful reinforcement of the police enabled the dewan to relieve the country from this source of oppression, and to complete the revenue system. Thus too has been accomplished an object never before attained by any former dynasty in Mysore:—The direct authority of the government has been introduced and maintained effectually over all the pollams within its territory. All the remaining poligars, who escaped the massacre ordered by Tippoo Sultaun after the defeat of his army in 1791, have accepted military commands or gratuitous pensions: They now

attend the dewan in his official progress through the country, and are pleased with that deference and respect which his good sense suggests as the best mode of treating them.

Under such a vigorous police the whole of the revenue system became efficient; the practice of assassinating the aumils was detected, and capitally punished; and protection was extended, for the first time, to the whole class of cultivators. It is remarkable, that, amidst the endless succession of revolutions, which in ancient or latter times have disturbed every district of this country, no alteration seems to have been produced on the tenure by which the lands in cultivation are held by the ryuts. This tenure exactly resembles that which has already been described in Bengal, where it is termed pottah; and which prevails also in the lower Carnatic, under the technical denomination of *meeras*, an Arabic term signifying inheritance. It is the hereditary right of cultivation, belonging to a tenant and his heirs, entailing them to occupy a certain piece of ground on the condition of paying the customary rent of the district. As cultivation only can enable the tenant to pay this rent, it is held, that when that ceases his right reverts to government which is then entitled to confer it on another. I have met with no well authenticated instance of a different tenure in India, except in the remarkable cases of Bednore and Bullum; where the property of the soil is vested in landholders, and where the

hereditary right of succession to that property is held as sacred as in any part of Europe. This venerable institution of hereditary property in these provinces is ascribed to Seapa Naick, a rajah, who governed that country at a remote period. This peculiar tenure, including military service, and so much resembling those of Europe, has, like them, had the effect of checking the authority of despotism in both districts where it prevailed. In Bullum the power of Hyder and Tippoo was always precarious; nor was it completely conquered till 1802, when its roads were opened by General Wellesley; since which it has remained in perfect tranquillity.

The province of Bednore still more forcibly illustrates the power of a landed aristocracy in limiting the despotic power of the monarch; for although it was conquered by Hyder as early as 1763, and although every measure that he could conceive to conciliate the landholders was adopted, a conspiracy was formed, to massacre him, among the principle proprietors, and the officers of the late government. This conspiracy was punished by the execution of not fewer than three hundred persons; the rest of the landholders, were disarmed, and their military service commuted for money. Still, however, their subordination to Hyder's despotic government could only be secured by the constant maintenance of 25,000 foreign troops; though a more mild and equitable system of government would probably have attached them securely to his person: In as far as the perma-

plenty among that class of men in any part of India. That the security and comfort of the peasantry of Mysore was remarkably improved during the few years of the British administration that had then elapsed, there can be no reason to doubt ; that this improvement afforded a high satisfaction to government, and a subject of just exultation to its agents, may be readily admitted. It remains, therefore, to consider the state of the courts of justice, and the internal structure of the government, which was to preserve these advantages ; a department which the reporter • freely acknowledges to fall below the same standard of comparison. The appointment of a Brahmin to the supreme direction of the civil government of Mysore, ensured a due regard to the ancient institutions of the country, and to the ordinances of Hindoo law. There is no separate department for the administration of justice in this part of India, with the exception of a few cazies in the cities, whose duty only extends to the adjustment of ecclesiastical matters among the Mussleman inhabitants ; and of some officers who perform the same duty among the Hindoos, under the guidance of the shasters, or former custom. The aumils in each district have the charge of the police ; and, with the assistance of the peons already described, adjust all minor cases of personal injury. The superintendence of these aumils is committed to three subadars, appointed to the respective provinces of Bangalore, Chittledroog and Bednore ; and those officers direct the proceedings in all important cases, whether criminal or civil. The pro-

cess is simple and apparently more equitable than what is commonly observed in India. The accused person, on apprehension, is carried before the amil or subadar, and, if a public trial be found necessary, a *panchaet*, or commission of five, is ordered to assemble in open cutcherry, where all the respectable inhabitants have a right of attending, and of becoming assessors. The defence of the prisoner, and the evidence of such persons as he chooses to summon, are always inserted in the proceedings of this court, and forwarded to the dewan for his decision; who, in all cases of difficulty, or where life or liberty is concerned, orders a final hearing, and with the assistance of the resident, pronounces his judgment. Capital punishment, except in cases of murder, and plundering on the frontiers, has seldom been inflicted. The five first years of the British government exhibits a most satisfactory diminution of the number of executions; exclusive of the rebellion of Doondia, and some temporary insurrections, their average amount seems only to have been four or five, and, during the last year, only a single instance of capital punishment is recorded.

Under the judicial administration of a Brahmin, confinement and hard labour, as might be expected, were more frequently resorted to, than the punishment of death; accordingly, examples of this sort of infliction, sometimes amounted to two or three hundred; owing, however, to the efficiency of the police, the number of these also are diminished; and

during the fifth year, 149. only were punished by confinement. In the circumstances of Mysore, so recently loosed from the restraints of the ancient government, and so generally infested with insurrection and rebellion, these punishments may be deemed few in number, as well as lenient in their nature.

The mode of administering civil justice among the natives of India is but imperfectly described in any authentic document that has yet reached Europe. That established by the dewan in Mysore, is simple, and bears a strict analogy to the forms established for criminal causes. The *aumil*, the same officer, presides in both : in the civil court he has the power of hearing and determining all causes of disputed property, not exceeding the value of five pagodas, provided the process is carried on in open court. Causes of a larger amount are referred to a *panchaet*, similar to that for trying criminal suits. The name of this court is derived from the number of its members, *panch*, five ; its form has at once the appearance of fairness and simplicity. In cases where both parties are Hindoos, the *panchaet* is usually composed of that class ; where they are of different sects, two members are admitted to the court for each party, and a fifth from the sect of the defendant.

In plain cases, where no difference of opinion has occurred in the *panchaet*, the *aumil* confirms its award, and forwards the proceedings to the presence. In cases of greater difficulty, the proceedings are

forwarded with the report of the subadar or aumil, and the dewan, in communication with the resident, pronounces a final decision. Thus, in all causes whatever, the parties have the right of appeal to the dewan and resident; and this right is facilitated in its exercise by the frequent tours made through the country by that officer. From the known propensity of the natives to litigation, much difficulty is often felt in keeping pace with the rapid encrease of suits; in Mysore this did not occur to any serious extent, the most fertile source of litigation, being stopped by the proclamation which announced the remission of all balances of revenue due to the government. In this structure of the Indian court, we discern something analogous to a British jury; but the form of its proceedings differs materially from that observed in ours. Before the trial commences, the plaintiff first, and after him, the defendant, is required to give a circumstantial narrative of the transaction which involves the matter at issue; this narrative is carefully committed to writing, and twice read over to the party, who corrects what has not been properly stated; the document is then authenticated by his signature, that of two witnesses, and a public officer. The correct agreement of this narrative, with the facts subsequently established, is considered as constituting strong circumstantial evidence in favour of the party, and its disagreement with any material fact, as amounting to the presumption of a fictitious claim, or a false defence. The Hindoo jurisprudence, it would seem, enjoins this previous proceeding, so

nearly resembling the *precognition* of the Scots criminal law.

Testimony is next received, according to the forms prescribed by the religion of each witness; and, in order, first for the plaintiff, and next for the defendant, all matters of general notoriety being deposed to, either by the assessors present, or by witnesses summoned for that purpose. The most essential difference between the principle of these proceedings and those of an English court, consists in the degree of credibility which is annexed to testimony on oath. It appears that the spirit of English jurisprudence is to receive, as true, the testimony of a competent witness, till his credit is impeached by contrary evidence. In the Mysore, as in the greater part of India, it is a fixed rule, to suspect, as false, the testimony of every witness, until its truth is otherwise supported. As a consequence of this rule, it follows, that the panchacts are anxious for the examination of collateral facts, of matters of general notoriety, and of all that enters into circumstantial evidence; and that their decisions are much more influenced by this kind of proof, than is consistent with the rules of evidence to which we are accustomed.

This extraordinary mode of estimating the truth of evidence in India, is perhaps best suited to its real value; for the most enlightened lawyers in the country have pronounced their practical conviction, that the natives are generally and lamentably defi-

cient in that ordinary degree of veracity which in other countries is cherished as the vital principle of moral conduct. It may in part be ascribed to their religious institutions, which not only fail in binding the conscience, but hold out expiations for perjury in all its forms : But so gross a practical defect in the morals of the people may perhaps be more justly attributed to the despotic government under which they have immemorially lived : Since it has involved them in the habitual necessity of opposing fraud to force. This view of the subject is more consoling to a benevolent mind ; for it admits of the hope that the melancholy evil will subside on the establishment of a better order of things.

Such is the general arrangement of police and revenue, and such the plan of criminal and civil jurisdiction established by Poorniah in Mysore, copied no doubt, in part, from the previous institutions of the country : yet, evidently displaying a comprehensive judgment, in framing a system so competent to correct abuses, and to promote the sober and practical ends of good government. It is the opinion of the intelligent framers of this report, (whose language I have used, where necessary abbreviations would permit), that no oppression of any magnitude can long exist, provided the resident discharges his duty. By the subsidiary treaty all measures of importance are ultimately referred to the controul of this officer, whose authority is meant to form a necessary check on every department, and if, to temper and probity,

he add an ordinary degree of vigilance, the substantial objects of a good government will be to the people in a more perfect degree than any of the native governments of India.

In a volume professedly written, with a view to ascertain the effects of the British power on the condition of the natives of India, this ought to be a fact of too great importance to rest solely on the authority of individual opinion. We therefore submit to the reader a few objects of statistical information relating to Mysore, which seem to place the resources and increasing prosperity of that country in the most satisfactory point of view.

1. The population of the Mysore, during the first years of the present system, has increased nearly 45,000 families, or, according to the common computation, 202,260 persons. In a period, the natural course of population could effect so considerable an increase; it must be ascribed to emigration, from the surrounding countries, where a less perfect degree of government had induced the inhabitants to this measure. Every circumstance, however, forms a strong presumption in favour of the government, and may be received as a direct proof that it is deemed by the natives themselves preferable to what is established in the surrounding districts.

The actual state of population in the Mysore, (in spite of all the calamities it has suffered under the late dynasty), seems to lead to a similar conclusion. That portion of the country which has lately been restored to the native Rajali, contains about 37,000 square miles; and, admitting the population to amount to the ordinary computation of 2,171,750, it gives the number of 57 persons nearly to every square mile. There is, perhaps, no well authenticated instance of a greater population in any part of the Deccan: It is the more remarkable, because the whole period of 40 years, during which the usurpation of Hyder and of Tippoo continued, was distinguished by almost incessant calamities: Besides the miseries occasioned by the conquests of these princes, and by their consequent despotism, ten different invasions of Mahratta armies are recorded; while the merciless ravages of Purseram Bhow are still visible in the various districts which he pervaded in 1791 and 1792.

2. The increase of agricultural produce to support this population, is no less remarkable than the fact itself. A very great proportion of the annual produce of Mysore depends on artificial irrigation; and the most interesting subjects of statistical inquiry in that country are those numerous embankments of rivers and *nullas*, which are formed for this purpose. The dewan Poorniah has brought many thousands of these into repair by incessant attention, and at an annual expence amounting from 1 to 200,000 pa-

godas. Their past and present state, even on the slightest comparison, will afford a very satisfactory view of the exertions of this minister and the present government. In 1799 these works had universally fallen into the most lamentable state of decay: Tanks which had been broken and disused from two to three hundred years, were visible in every part of the country, and very many were overgrown with jungle, forgotten, and perhaps unknown. In the course of these last few years, every embankment and nulla then in use, was in compleat repair; such even as may have been injured during the rainy season, being immediately restored within the same year; and during the same period, several hundreds of each description of these works have been repaired and reclaimed, after having lain forgotten in the depths of the forests for two hundred years.

3. The industry of the people has been improved and stimulated by these public efforts of government, and has begun to display its effects in different other directions. In 1799, the number of peopled villages amounted to 23,017: in 1805, they had encreased upwards of 2000, having then risen to 25,303, exclusive of 3000 more, whose lands, being deprived of cultivators, had been reclaimed by the ryots of the adjacent districts. The number of plows, upon whose labour the whole population was to subsist, had encreased above 30,000; and that of looms, from 20,000, to upwards of 30,000, or above one-third of their whole amount; while al-

most every other branch of industry, whether rural or domestic, had encreased in a similar proportion. These improvements have been all effected under circumstances of great difficulty; they were partly accomplished during a famine in the adjoining Mahratta territories, when the Mysore was burdened with the support of upwards of 20,000 emigrants, whose lives were saved by its seasonable relief; they took place, also, during a severe contest between the British government and the confederate Mahratta chiefs, when it was drained by supplying the former with a large subsidiary force, and grain to the amount of 60,000 bullock loads. All these different arrangements, relating to the government of this country, were submitted to Sir A. Wellesley, who, with three other commissioners, directed their execution; and the impression made on his mind by their successful result, he thus expresses, in concluding his dispatch to the Governor-General: "I now take the liberty of congratulating your Excellency upon the success of all your measures respecting the government of Mysore, and upon the practical benefits which the British government has derived from its establishments: I cannot avoid, at the same time, expressing an anxious hope, that the principles upon which that government was established, and has been conducted and supported, will be strengthened and rendered permanent." The Marquis of Wellesley, under a still more perilous responsibility, seems to have also felt a very full sense

of lively exultation at the success of those measures: His minute on this subject ought not to pass unnoticed in adducing proofs of the recent prosperity of Mysore, were it merely to record a just encomium which he pays to Poorniah, the native Brahmin, who administered this government: " Under the operation of the treaties of Mysore and Seringapatam, in the course of five years, that country has acquired a degree of prosperity which it could not possibly have attained under any other system of political connection, and has been enabled in some degree to repay, by the efficacy of its assistance in the hour of emergency, the benefits which it has derived from the protecting influence and power of the British government. I discharge a satisfactory part of my duty, in availing myself of this occasion to record the high sense I entertain of the merits and services of the Dewan Poorniah. To the extraordinary abilities, eminent public zeal, integrity, judgment, and energy of that distinguished minister, must be ascribed, in a considerable degree, the success of the measures which I originally adopted for the government of Mysore, and the happy and prosperous condition of that flourishing country."

Such has been the happy influence of a prudent co-operation of British and native officers in the government of the recently conquered territory of Mysore. In almost every country in India, where the British power has yet been established, similar im-



provements might have been stated, and in some instances to a still greater amount. Except, however, in the neighbourhood of the three presidencies, they have never been detailed to Europeans with the same accuracy and skill which is so conspicuous in the report of Major Wilks, from which this short sketch has been principally drawn.

SECTION V.

THOUGHTS CONCERNING THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THOSE CALAMITIES WHICH THE NATIVE PRINCES HAVE SUFFERED FROM THEIR SUBJUGATION BY BRITISH CONQUESTS.

FROM the different views that have been taken of the effects of the judicial power, when exercised in India by the native princes, and by the British government, it has appeared, in the foregoing Section, with considerable evidence, that, in the hands of the latter, justice has been more steadily, as well as mildly administered; and that tranquillity, order, and protection have been more effectually secured to the great body of the inhabitants. Domestic order, the first step to external peace, has thus been better provided for: war, however, though now become less frequent, has not ceased. Its incessant recurrence has always been regarded as the peculiar scourge of Hindostan; and it may justly be questioned, whether

a succession, even of foreign conquests, has added to its frequency in that country. It will not, however, be denied, that a continued series of victories gained by Europeans, must have forced the stream of this calamity with peculiar aim against those princes whom it endangered, either in their power, independence, or personal safety.

During the last fifty years, a train of successes has followed the British arms in Asia, more numerous, varied, and compleat, than history has recorded in the annals of any other nation ; we have had frequent occasion to notice instances where these conquests have been productive of good, even among the vanquished themselves ; it is fair to examine also the nature and extent of the mischiefs they may have occasioned : These mischiefs have flowed, either upon the people, as the general results of a state of war, or upon the sovereign princes, whose power was overthrown ; or, they must have arisen from the distress in which they involved their families ; or, in the last place, from the peculiar sufferings of the chiefs who discharged the public functions of government.

War has, perhaps, been too frequently regarded as a source of pure and unqualified evil : By the constitution of human nature, it seems to be one of the established modes of communicating the knowledge and improvement, attained by one portion of our race, to the inhabitants of the rest of the globe :

In modern Europe a different system was adopted by the various states : The prevalence of a more rational faith ; and the exigence of their situation in a close vicinity of smaller kingdoms, gave rise to a maxim of international policy, which directs that combinations should be formed among the weaker powers ; not for conquest, but to preserve their own independence, and to check power and ambition wherever it might arise and become dangerous to the existence or safety of any particular state. This policy, technically denominated the balancing system, was long maintained in the European world ; towards the close of the fifteenth century, when the first adventurers from Europe reached India, and acquired settlements there, it was recognised and pursued in the East with vigilance and energy ; and powerfully operated in checking, or limiting the acquisitions of any single power on the continent of Asia.

During a period of nearly two centuries, the wars of European nations in Hindostan, were maintained almost entirely against each other : Their different factories had been purchased, not conquered, from the native princes : Hence the Mogul empire was by them suffered to remain unshaken, during a long series of ages ; for it was not until nearly the middle of the eighteenth century that any considerable fort was erected, or even a regiment raised by Europeans, in any part of its territory. Its total overthrow might, perhaps, have been effected in one or two campaigns, had the European armies been combined against it ;

but none of the four maritime states, then known in India, made any joint attack or serious impression on that immense, but frail fabric, of Asiatic power : They suffered it to totter under its own unwieldy magnitude, and to be torn to pieces by the rude and rebellious factions of its own population, which was, at that period, reckoned to amount to an hundred and twenty millions of people.

The British and French, the two leading powers, were fully occupied by that inveterate hostility and rivalry, which seemed to have been revived with symptoms of acerbation, rather than abatement, by their intercourse with India. It was for the purpose of mutual annoyance, or of self-defence, that they at first entered into alliance with the native princes, disciplined their troops, or engaged in their quarrels. • In these contests, the French power, which for ten years had made so brilliant a figure in the East, was compleatly checked, and their troops dispersed through that country : So loose, however, and unsettled are the native governments in India, that almost any individual may raise up adherents, and precipitate the country into war. From the remains of the French army, many enterprising individuals were scattered all over Hindostan ; these men, from necessity, attached themselves to the native princes, engaged in disciplining their troops, and successfully animated their leaders with the same hostility which actuated all their own pursuits. Long after every national enterprize of the French had been defeated in

India, these indefatigable agents were busy at the court of Hyder Ally, of the Nizam, and of Scindiah, and were successful in forming several grand confederacies among the native princes, against the British power. Almost all the late wars of the India Company have originated in this source. So far from having been desirable or advantageous to that body, they have added upwards of thirty millions to its public debt, checked its commerce, diminished its revenue, and cast upon its government the odious imputation of restless ambition.

Even without the instigation of foreign councils, the princes of India are prone to war: Urged as they have been, by party declamation at home, and by French invectives against our avarice and rapacity, their aggressions have been not less frequent than obstinate. Even the British senate itself seems to have at times listened to these misrepresentations, and to have suspected, that the incessant hostilities of its Indian government, which resulted from its situation, might be owing to the crime of ambition. It made various enactments against conquests; but what was more effectual, had the object been attainable, characters were selected for the direction of Indian affairs, the most remarkable for steadiness and moderation, and of the most unimpeachable probity and honour: Such qualities unquestionably belonged to many of our governors, but more certainly to the late Marquis Cornwallis; for, it is believed, that even the natives themselves, on the most trying

occasions, never once suspected, either his justice, benevolence, or integrity. Was peace in India the consequence of these measures, or of selecting this nobleman? or rather was not his administration, without fault of his own, distinguished by a contest with Tippoo Sultaun, perhaps the most obstinate and perilous which has ever tried British valour in Asia? It may be presumed, therefore, that in such circumstances no governor of British India can possibly be answerable for the continuance of peace in that country; the paramount duty of self-preservation, being always more powerful than the enactments of a statute, must dictate the necessity of war as often as such a case occurs. War, when begun, may end in conquest, and conquest may lead to aggrandisement.

More than half a century has elapsed since the British East India Company stood in the rank of sovereign of large territories in several parts of India; and, till within these few last years, many of its princes had never felt the weight, and hardly the influence of its power. Possessed of irresistible authority, and surrounded with so many sources of provocation, perhaps there is seldom afforded by history any similar example of forbearance and moderation. The characters of men, taken in the aggregate, are, in all countries, and in similar situations, nearly alike; a circumstance which forbids us to ascribe this singular occurrence to the individual virtue, or the uncommon moderation, of our

Indian statesmen. Its true cause will be found in that high responsibility which the free government of Britain imposes on the different agents of its power. Public opinion is, there, at once invigorated and enlightened by the liberty of the press; and it forms the grand court in which all ministerial delinquency is tried in the first, and in the last resort; it is as difficult to escape from the authority of this incorruptible court, as it is impossible to appeal from its sentence; and, fortunately, the culprit whom it decidedly condemns can expect but little favour before any inferior tribunal. Almost the whole of the governors of British India, have had their merits, more or less, strictly canvassed by this great arbiter of their fame: Hence their moderation; and hence the reputation with which they have (many of them at least) retired to the bosom of their country. Notwithstanding the clamour of party, and the long and rigorous prosecutions, to which some of our Indian statesmen have lately been subjected, there is not, upon record, any one case of unprovoked aggression of the native princes that has been fully made out against them.

The last war against Holkar was, by some, deemed a marked objection to this observation; but, on the arrival of the late dispatches from India, it clearly appeared that the attack and defeat of that chief, was more strictly of his own voluntary procuring, than almost any war in India. From his own correspon-

dence, as well as that of General Lake and the Governor-General, it is manifest that he had marched his army from his country to enforce the payment of (Chout) tribute from the allies of the Company; that, while his letters to these officers were filled with the common slang of Indian hypocrisy, breathing nothing but the "most earnest desire of strengthening the bonds of amity and friendship," he was at the same instant corresponding with the princes of Upper India, and endeavouring to excite the allies and subjects of Britain to form a grand confederacy against her. In answer to the remonstrance of the commander in chief, requesting him to cease hostility, and withdraw his army from the territory of the British allies, he writes, "As I entertain no improper ill-will in my *friendly heart* against you, which might rise to hostility, how should I do any thing contrary to friendship?—before you wrote to me, I had resolved to march; and have done so now, in consequence of your letter to me; and will in no manner hold any improper language to your friends." Holkar had not, in reality, marched away his troops; and never meant to do so, as appeared afterwards from a conference with his two ambassadors, held by General Lake. After this evasive correspondence had, as he supposed, put the general off his guard, and furnished time for his chiefs to assemble, he threw off the mask, and boldly demanded certain territories to be conferred on him, and a sum of money to be paid by the British go-

ment of territory; and this resolution was afterwards embodied in the statute book, in the form of a law of the empire. Although such enactments could not alter the hazardous situation of our power in India, yet they may answer the end of a public record of our determination against all unjust aggressions of the native powers.

Such, Lord Lake well knew, were the sentiments of a man whose knowledge was as unquestioned, as his opinions were venerated, from his being the first founder of our Indian dominion; such too, he was aware had long been the decided tone of public opinion.

The war with Holkar, immediately occasioned another equally unavoidable, but far more disastrous: It was that against the rajah of Bhurtpore, the celebrated chief of the Jants, who, in his impregnable fortress, sustained five different assaults of the British troops, and as often repulsed them with severe loss. This prince, the representative of an ancient tribe of Hindoo warriors, was one of the British allies whom the intrigues of Holkar had seduced from his allegiance; and whose reduction cost more European blood, than, perhaps, any similar enterprise. If, then, this act must be ascribed to British ambition, we assert, with a great poet, that it was "a grievous fault;" and with him too we acknowledge, "that grievously have Britons answered it."

But we steadily deny that Lord Lake, in this case, was guilty of ambition: He acted uprightly in a crisis of eminent responsibility and danger; and it does not appear that a single argument can be adduced against him, that will not, with equal force, militate against retaining a single acre of ground in India;—for, through the whole of that country, property has always been an object of plunder, and every act of aggression establishes a right of defence, which, if successful, must provide for future security. Power, wherever lodged, must, in such circumstances, often tend to its accumulation; at least, the exercise of it in Asia, can neither be relaxed, or abandoned, even for a limited time, without soon endangering its own existence. From the moment that Great Britain appeared as a great territorial power and sovereign state in India, from that period she was pledged to defend herself and her subjects; to assert the contrary, were too absurd to require any refutation. Among the many invectives against the criminality of British conquests in India, we find those of Mr Fox and Sir Phillip Francis peculiarly virulent: The latter asserts*, that our commerce produced factories; factories required armies, and armies effected conquests; conquests produced extended dominion, and this last brought us to our present condition. To this, it may be sufficient to reply, in the words of Lord Castlereagh, that all this

* Parliamentary Debates, March 28, 1804.

might be true, though it did by no means follow, that it originated in any criminal ambition on our part.

Mr Fox has alledged, that all our suspicions and alarms respecting the hostility of the independent states, were counterfeited, in order to furnish a pretence for attacking them. But many of the native princes as well as Holkar, are known to have subsisted their armies for years by constant war against their neighbours, or by plundering their own dominions: The great Mahratta empire, containing thirty millions of inhabitants, and more than one half of the territory of India, had been rapidly formed and enlarged by the depredations of a single tribe, whose inordinate turbulence and ambition had, in fact, no limits but those of the peninsula itself. In the immediate vicinity of this people, animated by their native ferocity, and instigated by the councils of France, the British government could feel no alarms for its safety that could justly be deemed groundless: nor could its plea of necessity for constantly providing for its actual defence, or future security, ever be urged upon imaginary grounds: Its situation must have at all times been critical, and its dangers real.

Even in Europe, where the principles of public law, and international justice are supposed to be better understood, it does not appear, that inordinate power, when attained by one nation, has been opposed with so much firmness and moderation, as the

overgrown force of the Mahratta empire has been withstood in India: Neither has that powerful ascendancy, which we have lately beheld in one state, spared the independent rights of the rest of Europe for a period so considerable as fifty years. In this quarter of the globe, the balancing system was not merely established, but confirmed by a long experience of its salutary effects, and was upheld by the veneration of every state; yet ten years have scarcely elapsed since it was first disturbed or broken, and at the present moment hardly any vestige, or shadow of independence can be traced in any corner of the continent of Europe.

The distribution of power among the states of India, may no doubt be faulty; and the exercise of it irregular; yet its effects at present are unquestionably less grievous, than the consequences of the system prevalent in Europe. The conduct of no nation in this quarter has been such as to furnish it with any just ground of calumniating the character or condition of the Indian governments. If, as has been alledged, its princes have been reduced to a state of dependence; it is unfair that they should suffer reproach from those whose misconduct has so recently reduced themselves to a much more desperate condition.

Ambitious, tyrannical, and all-powerful as the British government has been represented in India, it has not yet presumed to fulminate a sentence of de-

thronement and expatriation against any prince not actually at war. Amidst all the families of its most inveterate but fallen enemies, there is not one which like that of Braganza, has been first plundered, and afterwards banished from Asia. It will readily be admitted that, *that* alleviation of misery is but small, which arises from discovering that others are still more wretched than ourselves; and that any defence of our India government were weak, which barely stated that other powers had been still more profligate and ambitious than itself. But the munificence of the British government in Asia has been great beyond example; and must have operated the most ample relief of all private or individual distress. It is true that many of the native princes have lost their independent power; a loss too severe to be estimated by any private individual to whom its charms are unknown. But if we are permitted to estimate the "pain of falling greatness" by the degree of sympathy which it has excited in India the suffering must unquestionably have been great: for it is a fact, capable of the most rigorous proof, that the British government in India administers to the comfort of the native princes, in its dominions, greater sums than any other power upon earth. These pensions and bounties are annually charged against its revenue, and may therefore easily be ascertained; but this circumstance which adds so much to its certainty, can by no means detract from the merit of the gift.

The supreme power in Hindostan, as in all semi-barbarous countries, could not be deemed strictly hereditary: The dynasty was often changed by revolt; and perhaps the legitimate succession was still more frequently deranged by the caprice of the reigning despots; as in the late example of Oude. A short time prior to the establishment of the British power, thirteen different Emperors had grasped the precarious sceptre in the same number of years. The succession among all the inferior princes who, in these disastrous times, usurped independent authority, was marked by the same irregularity. During the whole time of the British conquests the overthrow of the Mogul Empire was an event so recent, that hardly any reigning prince could be invested with a more respectable character than that of an usurper, who had personally but little hope of securing his own authority, and of consequence, still less expectation of transmitting it to his heirs.

Hence it frequently happened, that the overthrow of a hostile chief by the British arms, was accompanied by an act of justice, and afforded the consolation of restoring much of his former dignity and power to another legitimate prince, whom some recent violence had hurled from a throne. A reign of forty years had rewarded the usurpation of Tippoo and his father; time had in some degree sanctioned, as well as consolidated their authority, and the death of the former must have proved a severe affliction to his family. Short as the reign of this dynasty may

appear, it had a stronger plea of prescriptive right, than perhaps any other which the British power had vanquished : The victors themselves might have lamented its fall, had the violence of Tippoo left them any alternative of safety, but that of his destruction. But in this case, as well as in every other, the contemplation of the suffering which the British arms had inflicted, must have soon been efaced by the happy prospect of raising, from a prison to his throne, the lawful sovereign and his family.

In a short time after this event, the different Mahomedan officers of Tippoo's government, and the various branches of the Rajah's family, were assembled to hear the determination of their fate from the British Commissioners : The intervening moments must have past under emotions not easily described. The former, on hearing the sudden change of their fortunes announced, after a miserable confinement of forty years, could hardly believe in the reality of the scene before them : They were utterly incapable of expressing the powerful feelings of gratitude which it had excited. The latter, whose uniform ill-treatment of their own prisoners had led them to expect, either some severe infliction, or instant death, were equally astonished, on being assured that each individual was to enjoy a liberal pension during the rest of his life; and that too, from those very enemies whom they had cruelly maltreated. Scenes like these are peculiar to the vicissitudes of war ; and as oft as they occur, they must afford to suffering humanity

some consolation amidst the numerous calamities, which it too invariably inflicts.

After all these palliating circumstances, the severity of Tippoo Sultaun's sufferings, and those of his family, has far surpassed the ordinary standard even of royal misery in India: His sons were of an age capable of feeling the full weight of the calamity which overwhelmed them: The death of their father which hurled them in a moment from the proud eminence of power and independence, into all the unknown horrors of a confinement, in which they must rely on the bounty of their enemies, produced one of those sad reverses of fortune, which it is impossible to contemplate without the most poignant affliction. At a period long prior to this, while these princes were as yet children, and when their fate had not reached this dreadful extremity, their condition, as hostages in the British camp, had excited in Lord Cornwallis and his whole army, feelings of the strongest commiseration. The first interview of the princes with this nobleman took place in the midst of the British camp; and was anxiously viewed by their parents from the crowded walls of the capital. As their retinue passed through the plain, it arrested the eyes of every beholder, among that vast, but silent multitude with which it was then filled; and this whole catastrophe, which concluded with the death of the mother, a favourite wife of the Sultaun, has furnished history with an incident, perhaps the most

interesting by which it can engage the sympathy of succeeding generations.

But the real situation of the conquered princes in Hindostan, is by no means to be estimated by the sad catastrophe of Tippoo Sultaun, and his family, which his own fortitude, or invincible hostility has rendered so peculiarly disastrous. The whole number of these dependent princes, which has lately become so considerable, may easily be arranged under two distinct classes ; the first consisting of such as have long since been subdued, and reinstated in their territories as dependents and allies of our Indian government. Their sovereign power, it must be allowed, is in many respects circumscribed ; and their dominions are in some degree absorbed in the British Empire ; yet, however little may seem to remain for the gratification of their ambition, much certainly has been left, not only for their comfort, but for splendour, and for all the purposes of munificence and true dignity.

One remarkable proof of the fidelity with which the India Company has discharged the duties imposed on it by the subsidiary treaties with the native powers, cannot escape notice ; it is furnished by that compleat security, contentment, and longevity, enjoyed by almost every prince thus allied to its government. The late emperor, Shah Allam, lived for a period considerably beyond four-score years ; and it is yet remembered by his coteremporaries, that

the only tranquil seasons of his life, were those which he spent under British protection. Mahommed Ally, nabob of the Carnatic, was nearly of the same age, when his demise opened a peaceable succession to his son. The case was the same with the Nizam, the nabobs of Oude and Bengal, who all lived as cotemporaries under the shelter of the British power, in greater tranquillity, and for a much longer period, than is customary among the sovereign princes of India. Time, and the growing influence of the Indian government, had so much diminished or allayed their ambition, that, although unrestrained in their personal liberty, none of them either swerved from their allegiance, or deserted that protecting power, which so effectually sheltered them from the attacks of their enemies.

The junior branches of the families of Indian sovereigns, must, on the conquest, have experienced a change, rather favourable than unpropitious to their tranquillity and real comfort. They had formerly been objects of jealousy, rivalry, and suspicion; and were therefore most commonly either confined to a dungeon, or else engaged in acts of rebellion. Under the controul of the British power, there is no room for such enterprises; hence they associate with their relations as equals; and are held together by the gentler ties of natural affection. Those distant and precarious prospects of sovereignty, which so often dazzled or misled them, are happily exchanged for the more substantial comfort of private happi-

ness ; and there seems to be nothing in their condition, which can excite, even in themselves, a wish for the return of the more elevated, but dangerous fortunes of their house.

This delineation of the condition of the princes in India, does not so exactly apply to that of the nobles, as to the princes, and the rank immediately above them. The nobles, or great officers, under the former governments, rose to distinction in the different departments of the public service ; but in proportion as European agents have been advanced to the rank and trust of great officers of state, their number, as well as their importance, must of necessity be diminished. If Poorniah continued to fill the most important office of dewan in Mysore, it must be allowed, that many individuals of distinguished ability, and, perhaps, equal merit, have been laid aside ; and have sunk into a painful obscurity, which has drawn forth the most feeling lamentation from that venerable statesman and historian, the late Golan Hossein Khan. Should the question be asked, what order of men have been the greatest sufferers by the British conquests in Hindostan, every person at all acquainted with the circumstances of that country, must without hesitation reply, that almost every real hardship has fallen upon the Mahomedan and Hindoo nobles, who, during the native administrations, had enjoyed all the important offices of government ; and who now beheld many of those high honours

and emoluments, almost necessarily conferred on British agents.

But, besides these numerous chieftains, whose political consequence, and territorial power, has been nearly absorbed by the enlargement of the British empire in India, there remains another class, whose more recent aggressions have been defeated, and who, of consequence, have been compelled to enter into treaties of peace and alliance with the company's government. The independent power left to the native princes by the subsidiary treaties, is certainly much greater in appearance, than in reality; yet their stipulations are carefully drawn up with apparent fairness and equality, and with a real regard for the future peace of the country, and to the reciprocal interests of both parties. In general, the native princes, under the operation of these agreements, are left with a considerable share of influence as well as direct authority; the appointment to all offices, both civil and military, within their territory, is left to their own discretion; the command of their armies remains to be wholly exercised by themselves and their own officers, except in the single case of their joint co-operation with the Company's troops against a common enemy, when it is generally provided by treaty, that they shall obey the orders of the British or Company's commanding officer. One of the greatest evils resulting to the country from the former independent power of these princes, arose from their propensity to war, and from an inveterate habit of

invading and plundering the dominions of the neighbouring princes, as often as they found them either weak or defenceless: The right of entering into war, except with the approbation of the British Indian government, was agreed by the most rigorous stipulations to be relinquished; and the right of arbitration, in all cases of dispute with their neighbours, was conceded to the Governor-general, who, in the event of an unwillingness of the opposite party to submit to an amicable adjustment, is entitled to demand the assistance and the troops of the contracting prince, and to enforce submission. In return for these concessions, the Company's government was pledged, at all times, to defend the allied prince against all his enemies: and that its army might be constantly at hand, and in readiness to discharge this important trust, a subsidiary force was stipulated to be maintained by the prince, either within, or in the vicinity of his own territories. The number of troops, of which this subsidiary army consists, was determined by treaty; and generally bore a proportion to the revenues of the prince by whom it was paid, while its equipment, discipline, and command, was placed entirely in the hands of British officers.

These different stipulations, at once indicate the degree of restraint in which the native princes of India are held by the British government, and the views which it had in prospect in imposing them. Their effect in preventing the frequent recurrence of war has unquestionably been great: The calamities

rising from this source, have pervaded and desolated the country, under every shape, during many centuries, and have always formed the grand obstacle to Indian prosperity. As the intrigues of European enemies, and particularly the French, have invariably widened this source of suffering in every direction where they have been allowed to penetrate, it is, perhaps, one of the wisest of these precautionary measures, which binds each of the subsidiary princes not to admit into his dominions, a single individual from Europe, without the express consent of the British government. These treaties with the princes of India, are not the incidental or casual result of our intercourse with them, but have uniformly been dictated by a long experience of their beneficial consequences; and form, perhaps, the most studied, as well as the most successful branch of British policy in that country. They have, ever since their first formation, held in submission and tranquillity, all the great powers of the continent of India, from the emperor down to the more inconsiderable chiefs; and they have provided pay and subsistence for upwards of fifty thousand troops entirely at the expence of the native governments, for whose defence, as well as that of the Company, they have been originally raised. Like every measure of importance in a free country, these treaties have been discussed, praised, and condemned, with all the animosity of party zeal; but, as no arrangement of equal efficacy has yet been devised, it is probable that these subsidiary stipulations will long maintain their ground, on the

irresistible plea of tried expediency. Since their first adoption with the Nabobs of Bengal, Oude, and the Carnatic, no revolution or even disturbance of moment has yet ensued : Their operations with the Peishwah, Scindia, Holkar, and the Berar Rajah, without the same length of time for experiment, has been equally successful, if it does not promise to produce still happier fruits.

The treaty of Bassein, concluded by the British government and the Peishwah, has been most frequently deprecated and arraigned as the forerunner of mighty evils ; we therefore insert in a note * some of its provisions, and shall examine the validity of a few of the many objections that have been brought against it.

* This treaty, after a clause confirming former stipulations, subsisting between the two governments, in the second article proceeds to declare, that, if any state or power whatever, shall commit any act of unprovoked hostility or aggression against any of the contracting parties, or against their respective dependents or allies ; and if, after due representations, shall refuse to enter into amicable explanations ; or shall deny the just satisfaction and indemnity which the contracting parties shall have required ; then the contracting parties will proceed to concert and prosecute such farther measures as the case shall demand. For the more distinct explanation of this agreement, the governor-general in council, in behalf of the Honourable Company, hereby declares, that the British government will never permit any power or state whatever, to commit, with impunity, any act of unprovoked hostility or aggression against the rights and territories

Mr Cockburn, in a late essay on the means of civilizing India, which obtained the Buchanan prize in the University of Cambridge, has adverted to this treaty in the following terms : “ There is, however, one circumstance in the treaty of Bassein, which gives me some apprehension, and concerning which I shall take the liberty of offering a few remarks. By the third article it is stipulated, “ that 6000 soldiers of the British government shall be stationed constantly, not only in times of war, but in time of peace, in the Peishwah’s territories, under British officers, and in British pay ; for the purpose of protecting his Highness’s person and government : and

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of his Highness Rao Pundit Purdhaun Bahauder ; but will, at all times, maintain and defend the same, in the same manner as the rights and territories of the Honourable Company are now maintained and defended.

Third Article.—With a view to fulfil this treaty of general defence and protection, his Highness Rao Pundit Purdhaun agrees to receive, and the Honourable Company to furnish, a permanent force of not less than six thousand regular native infantry, with the usual proportion of field-pieces, and European artillery attached, and with the proper equipment of warlike stores and ammunition ; which force is to be accordingly stationed in perpetuity in his said Highness’s dominions.

Fourth Article.—For the regular payment of the whole expence of the said subsidiary force, his Highness Rao Pundit hereby assigns and cedes in perpetuity to the Honourable East India Company, all the territories detailed in the schedule annexed to this treaty.

in return for the expence which this will occasion to the East India Company, the Peishwah makes over to them certain lands," &c.

" Now, will it not inevitably follow, that the commander of these forces will have an influence over the Peishwah, whom we have already seen the victim of favouritism, amounting almost to absolute sway? Is it not natural to suppose, that, in the course of a few years, individuals will turn that influence to the purpose of enriching themselves, perhaps improperly? Is it not probable, that these soldiers, particularly in the idle licentiousness of peace, will be overbearing and disgusting to the natives, insulting and insulted? Will not, then, this arrangment make the Peishwah and his allies unpopular, and give an opportunity, either to some of those daring adventurers with which the Mahratta states abound, of drawing off the nation from their allegiance? Or will it not revive the hopes of the Berar Rajah, who would gladly see the destruction of the Peishwah's power. Foreign troops are always looked upon by every nation with a jealous eye; and weak and tottering is the throne that must have recourse to such supporters. I humbly conceive it would be more wise, and more dignified, to give back the paltry territory so acquired, and either to suffer a certain number of our troops to remain actually in the pay of the Peishwah, and incorporated with his own, or to stipulate, on every emergency, when he is attacked by external or internal foes, to assist him with

these 6000 men, or, indeed, with the whole force that can be spared from our neighbouring settlements.

“ It may appear, at first view, politic to keep these men at Poonah, as a guard over the Peishwah's actions, and to ensure his fidelity ; but while we thus preserve our influence over him, I fear he will lose his influence over his countrymen. If he is not our friend, 6000 men are too few to keep his country in subjection : If he is our friend, 6000 men are too many to form his body-guard. If I might venture to hazard a conjecture, I should say, that these 6000 men would be the cause of the next war in India.”

These objections, as well as a thousand more of the same nature, may easily be formed in the closet, against any practical measure of the India government. They are entirely speculative, and have but little reference either to the actual circumstances of the parties, or to past experience. It might be a sufficient answer to them, simply to state, that such subsidiary treaties with the conquered princes of India, had, when this gentleman wrote, a testimony in their favour of which he makes no account, and which he does not seem to have known ; it consists of thirty years experience of their salutary effects. None of the consequences which he deprecates have hitherto been the result of them ; while their peculiar advantage seems to consist in their effectually preventing that most serious of all evils, the occa-

sion of future war: were all the subsidiary troops to be withdrawn from the territories of the allied princes of India, as this writer seems to recommend, the experiment would certainly prove no less dangerous than decisive: For if any regard is paid to past experience, in forming a judgment of the future, the peace of India could not be maintained for six months after that event. Before these treaties were devised, and prior to that ascendancy of British power which enabled it to form them, history does warrant us to assert, that the universal tranquillity of the whole of India was never maintained, even during that short period.

It ought to be remembered, that the subsidiary princes had been all vanquished, and that the Peishwah had lost, not only his independence, but the whole of his dominions, to which he was restored by the British arms. It is, perhaps, not easy to conceive how he could be restored to so much power, dignity, and influence; or how he could be securely defended in their possession amidst so many hostile chiefs, without the necessity, or even the power on his part, of entering into war: All this has been effected by the subsidiary treaty; a measure by which this unfortunate prince has found redress for his past sufferings, and a sure provision for the future tranquillity of his kingdom. In his situation, the restraint imposed by the treaty must have been felt rather as a relief, than as a hardship: The case has been similar with all the dependent princes of India; it has

been necessity, not choice, that could dictate these treaties, or induce them to the surrender of the smallest share of independent power : It is certainly a strong proof of the delicacy, as well as caution, with which these subsidiary agreements have been drawn up, that the very fact of the dependence of one of the contracting parties has escaped the notice of those who inveigh against them.

If the grand principle upon which all these arrangements with the native princes have been formed, be practically useful, (and the experience of so many cases for thirty years certainly proves this), all minor objections against them must fall to the ground. The mighty obstacle arising from the influence of the resident, and his acquiring riches improperly, may easily be overcome by displacing him from his appointment. The same thing may be said of the dissolute habits of the troops. It does not appear that their residence in a particular country, should necessarily be productive of this consequence; if the fact prove otherwise, all that is requisite is, to change more frequently their routine of duty. The dilemma so peremptorily stated, respecting the number of the subsidiary troops, will always be easily solved by the local knowledge of the government of India, and by the officers on the spot ; it is a practical question, of which they are the only competent judges. " If the Peishwah is not our friend, 6000 men," according to Mr Cockburn, " are too few to keep his country in subjection : if he is our friend,

their number is too great to form his body-guard." The fact has been, that 10,000 men have been judged necessary in this very case, and by a subsequent modification of the treaty, their number has since been augmented to that amount; yet no practical difficulty has occurred in untying this gordian knot: The reasonings of speculative and practical men have often differed widely; but perhaps seldom more remarkably than in this case; for it is a certain fact, that the whole British inhabitants of India look forward with the same confidence to the subsidiary troops for maintaining the tranquillity of India, that future gentleman expects to find in them the seeds of this war.

If the real utility of the treaty of Bassein were to be ultimately decided by the opinions of any class of men, there certainly could be little cause for hesitation between the sentiments of speculative politicians, and the arrangements of those practical statesmen by whom that measure has been contrived and executed. But the advantages of this celebrated treaty, after ten years experience, are not now dependent on the opinions of either class. The deed has long ago been compleated; its effects are seen in the uniform and uninterrupted tranquillity of the country, during a much longer period than it ever hitherto enjoyed that blessing. Experiment, in every case, ought to be more decisive than argument: the latter may afford a presumption, where evidence is wanting; but the former alone supplies that sort

of proof by which practical men will always be guided in their conduct.

During the late war against a confederacy of the most powerful of the Mahratta chiefs, the subsidiary force at Poonah not only detached from their party the head of the state, but furnished the British army with an advanced post in the heart of the Mahratta empire itself. From this post it was enabled to march with ample supplies, and combined force, which not only conquered the confederated powers, but imposed upon them the same check against engaging in future war, which the Peishwah must always feel from the treaty of Bassein. With this view, similar subsidiary agreements have been concluded with all the late vanquished chiefs throughout the whole peninsula of India. Each prince has now stationed in the heart of his territories a powerful body of disciplined troops, whose duty, according to the terms of these treaties, is not only to suppress all internal revolt or insurrection within the native states, but to watch over the princes themselves, and to prevent them from forming intrigues and negotiations, for the purpose of exciting future wars. By means of various arrangements of this nature, with perhaps twenty different princes, the British government, is now enabled to guard the peace of India by a subsidiary force of upwards of 50,000 men, advantageously posted in different stations, and maintained solely at the expence of these princes themselves. These circumstances in the condition of In-

SECTION VI.

GENERAL SCOPE OF THE INQUIRY CONCERNING THE MEANS OF CIVILISING THE HINDOOS: ITS LIMITATIONS ; PREVIOUS STATE OF HINDOSTAN.

"WHAT are the best means of civilising and instructing the inhabitants of British India," is a question which implies various discussions of much difficulty, as well as of great extent and importance. The practical solution of this part of the question, belongs exclusively to government; and like the general welfare of the rest of the empire, it may be regarded as the great object continually before it, the attainment of which constitutes the chief aim of

all its exertions, whether of a legislative, executive, or juridical nature*.

The subject proposed for this enquiry contains a second branch, which refers to the means of diffusing the light of the Christian Religion through the eastern world : This part of the question belongs less immediately to the province of government, but is strongly interesting to the principle of universal benevolence and Christian philanthropy.

The whole question, has not been injudiciously selected for public attention ; for there is, perhaps, no other subject on which information is more generally wanted, and there are few, on which it could be so extensively useful. On these accounts, it would not appear, as some have alleged, to have been improperly submitted to the discussion of the scholars of

* Although every practical regulation for promoting the well-fare of British India, belongs exclusively to the legislature of the state ; the discussions of private individuals, seem rather calculated to promote than impede this great object. The information communicated by persons acquainted with the state of our Indian provinces, affords the only data upon which the legislative regulation can safely proceed. Without attending to the practical experience, and the local knowledge of such as have been on the spot, it is almost impossible to conceive that any practical system can be formed, adapted to the peculiar circumstances of the Asiatic Empire.

our Universities*; since its importance must challenge their emulation, while its acknowledged difficulty must give full exercise to their leisure and talents. Political knowledge and experience are unjustly denied to belong to these literary bodies; since the first is generally the fruit of leisure, and the latter, in the most extensive sense, is little else than an accurate knowledge of history.

The literary studies prescribed in our Universities are not so wholly unqualified by attention to public affairs, as to unfit their members from affording much assistance in so important a discussion. It is not merely in resolving some doubtful points regarding the topography, chronology, or ancient history of Asia, that we ought to look up to them for help. Nor ought it to be forgotten what a distinguished and honourable part their different *alumni* have uniformly borne in all those brilliant transactions which have raised the British power and name in the eastern world; however this may be, it might surely be regarded as a reflection, both against the judgement and curiosity of a learned age, did it leave no document behind it of ever having attempted to

* This has been done by the Rev. Claudius Buchanan, Vice Provost of the College of Fort William; who has proposed a liberal reward for the best dissertation on this interesting question, namely, "What are the best means of civilising the subjects of British India, and of diffusing the light of the Christian Religion through the eastern world?"

turn the public attention to a subject of so much importance as the prosperity of our Indian Empire.

Happily for Britain, many of her scholars have not been confined solely to the haunts of study; but their information and usefulness have contributed, both in politics and war to render her name conspicuous in every quarter of the world. They are, therefore, enabled to contribute to the elucidation of questions, such as that now before us, not merely their literary attainments, but the fruits of long experience, and a competent knowledge of the manners and local prejudices of the inhabitants of the East. They are on these accounts, best qualified to investigate those principles by which the legislature ought to be guided in regulating our Asiatic dominions. From having been eye witnesses of the influence and operation of these principles, they seem to be peculiarly fitted to detect any gross or practical errors that may have been committed in their application.

Such are the talents and acquirements which the British nation can bring to the investigation of every branch of its Oriental policy; and however respectable, they are certainly not more than adequate to the complete elucidation of a subject so intricate and profound. It is the work of ages, which the various exigencies of the present and future generations are

destined to elaborate and carry forward to its consummation.

Since, however, a full examination of every branch of Oriental policy would require, not an *Essay*, but many volumes, it is fair to infer, that the proposer of this question meant to restrict the enquiry to some of the more obvious and necessary regulations ; and to the removal of some of the most prominent obstacles to the comfort and happiness of our Indian subjects. This inference is indeed deducible from the words of the question, as by himself stated, which required, not a general enumeration of the various institutions that may be devised for the improvement of India, but merely, what out of the whole are "the best means of civilising and instructing that country."

Taking up the enquiry in this view, its extent and range will be greatly lessened: it will exclude all those expedients and provisions which are requisite in settling and reclaiming tribes of wandering savages in a state of primitive barbarism ; it will exclude almost every general regulation, which does not arise out of the exigencies of the Indian Empire, and which does not bear on the correction of some mischief or abuse, which may be prevalent in some part of the country.

In the following pages, therefore, it is intended merely to offer a few observations ; first, on the best

means of promoting the peace and security of India, which refer to the system established there for external defence and interior protection. Secondly, to suggest some measures for increasing the quantity of produce, arising from the labour of the husbandman and manufacturer, and thereby providing a more ample supply of subsistence for so vast a population ; and thirdly, to enquire what efforts may be deemed the most suitable for diffusing moral and religious instruction among the Eastern nations.

These branches of the general question are practical and important ; the smallest improvement in either of them, must be attended with consequences highly beneficial : The peace and good government of the country is the object of the first ; its plentiful and regular supply is aimed at by the second ; by the third is to be obtained the comfort and happiness of the people.

Before entering on the particular discussion of these divisions of our subject, it seems necessary to advert to the grounds of a very general persuasion, that all the distant possessions of every country must remain, from the very circumstances of the case, in a state of provincial depression, and comparative barbarism : That the splendid conquests made by Europeans in Asia are peculiarly hurtful ; since the fall and degradation of these eastern empires must be in proportion to the rank and opulence which

they formerly possessed : That the connection between such colonies and their parent state, contains in it a certain principle of deterioration ; and that by such an union, each continues corrupting and corrupted, till some fortunate circumstance occur to break the tie, and restore to the provinces their original independence.

Those disastrous circumstances which unavoidably accompany the first establishment of conquered countries, have no doubt given rise to this persuasion, which is by no means supported by the general testimony of history. That the Romans civilised the world by conquest, is a remark within the reach of every school-boy ; it is not, however, the less certainly true : it is true also, that no nation can carry its conquests to any great distance, without carrying also the useful arts. The perfection of military discipline and tactics implies the possession of many concomitant attainments, which it possessed by the invaded kingdom would prevent its subjection. The equipment and subsistence of numerous armies implies a vast train of resources which can belong to no people among whom commerce, as well as many useful branches of knowledge, are unknown. War is itself a science ; and its perfection was, perhaps, never attained by men of rude and uninformed understandings. There seems to be provision made by the very constitution of human nature, that war and invasion shall always be attended by a competent degree of skill in the arts, in order to heal those wounds

it must unavoidably inflict. It is a disease of human society of no small inveteracy and magnitude ; but it ought generally to be ranked among that class which renovates the constitution.

When the native Hindoos are represented, in the most ancient times, as being celebrated in arts and arms, and famed for the possession of various and profound knowledge* ; these assertions are prompted by a fond veneration of what is ancient, rather than a rigorous attention to the monuments of civilization, which they have left behind them. The great splendor and wealth of the eastern princes, which dazzled the eyes of Europeans, seems in this case to have biassed their judgment ; for, in fact, this splendor exists no where, except within the narrow precincts of the court : it is upheld there by the oppression, poverty, and degradation of the whole body of the people.

Their poverty, depression, and general ignorance, are the features of their condition which first strike the attention of every stranger†. The very language in which they are described by the Greek, Roman, and Arabian writers, is strictly applicable to them at present : they seem to have early acquired a certain degree of knowledge of many of the useful arts, but to have never carried any of them nearly to that degree of perfection which they attained in Greece and Rome, or in modern Europe.

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* Sir William Jones, Asiatic Researches.

† Judge Colebrooke's Agriculture and Commerce of Bengal.

If it was the imposing splendor of the court of Delhi, and of the Mogul Emperors, that first prompted our countrymen to exaggerate the wealth and civilization of Hindostan, a nearer and more accurate view of the different parts of this great fabric of power, has tended considerably to lower our notions of its perfection, and to abate our admiration of that knowledge by which it was constructed and upheld.

The brightest acras of the Tartar empire in India, were unaccompanied by that peace and security which sometimes flows even from despotism itself. During the reign of Acber, by far the most celebrated of the Mogul princes, we are informed by Abul Fazil, his patronised historian*, that the government of the Emperor was but imperfectly established in many of the provinces, and in all the four kingdoms of the Decan, was wholly unacknowledged, although the imperial power was then supported by an army amounting to no less than five millions of militia and regulars, and by a revenue yielding thirty-six millions sterling, in a quarter of the world where money bears nearly five times the value that it does in Europe.

Several of the successors of Acber, as Jehanguire, Shah Jehan, and Aurungzebe, by subsequent conquests, added still farther to the extent of the empire,

* Vide Ayeen Achery, passim.

and the splendor of the court ; yet the **Mogul** power, even in its greatest extent, was never established over the whole peninsula : a pretty strong presumption, that notwithstanding the warlike character, and vast resources of these princes, they were imperfectly skilled in military affairs. Indeed, every European, but tolerably versant in these subjects, must pronounce them comparatively ignorant of the science of war. Almost every military arrangement which they adopted, has been found at variance with the first principles of discipline and subordination : hence the fabric of Imperial power in India, however grand or imposing in outward appearance, could neither prove efficient nor durable. A militia consisting of the enormous disproportion of two thirds of cavalry to one of infantry ; and so numerous as to contain above a twentieth part of the whole population, seems itself an absurdity : an undefined military power, committed to chieftains almost independent of their sovereign, and connected with each other by hardly any principle of subordination : officers of the same rank serving for different rates of pay, while the whole of their **allowances** were irregularly issued, and sometimes altogether withheld : these are such radical defects in the constitution of an army, as must have converted it into a machine, at once unwieldy, inefficient, and dangerous. Opposed to a disciplined body of troops, the innumerable hosts of Acber would, perhaps, have been vanquished by a very moderate force.

These statements are confirmed by experience; for we find, in fact, that the Mogul armies, however expensive, never adequately served the great end of all military force; the external defence of the country, and its inward tranquillity. The empire, even in the vigorous reign of Aurungzebe, was never wholly free, either from foreign invasion, or from domestic revolt. Scarcely had the southern provinces been subjected to his power, when some of the northern and eastern were lost by defection. In the territories of Oude and Rohilcund, the vizier Sujah Dowlah, although constitutionally the first minister of the empire, secretly established that hereditary and independent power which is still vested in his family. The same successful treachery, under strong professions of loyalty, was practised by Ali Verdi Khan in Bengal, and by Nizam ul Muluck in the Deccan.

Mean time, the internal police of this vast country was far more imperfect and defective than might have been expected, even under this ill arranged military system. Our ambassador, Sir Thomas Roe, on his journey from Agra to Surat, declares, that in several provinces through which he passed, there were a greater number of rebels than of subjects; and on different occasions, that he saw the heads of several hundreds of robbers scattered upon the road, who had fallen victims to an irregular and ferocious police*.

* Vide Memoire du Chev. Roe, auprès le Mogul.

Such was the state of the Mogul empire during what has been denominated its prosperous reigns; but a contest for the succession to the throne, was after this period maintained by the four sons of Aurungzebe, each supported by a numerous army. This internal contention, either prepared or aggravated all those heavy strokes of fortune, by which the Mogul power was shaken to its foundation. It was afterwards ruined, and finally overthrown, by the rise of the Mahratta power, and by its rapid extension in the heart of the empire. The force of this singular combination of military despots, was speedily augmented by the concourse of thousands, whom the convulsions of the state had rendered destitute; or whom the hope of plunder could allure to its standard. Its usurpations were in a few years extended from the Indus to the Ganges, and brought along with them devastation and ruin, into almost every province of the peninsula.

The progress of the Mahratta power, which ought rather to be regarded as the rise of anarchy, than the prevalence of regular government, soon effaced many of the fairest monuments of the Mogul wealth and splendor. Animated by vengeance against their former oppressors, and perhaps prompted by their own innate barbarity, they repeated their spoliations till agriculture and commerce were nearly ruined.

In some provinces, where they were unable to maintain the full possession, they established a tribute of

one fourth of all the revenues, denominated from that circumstance, *the Chout**, which was exacted with unexampled rigour. In several parts, this badge of oppression still continues, notwithstanding the many checks lately given to their power. During this disastrous period, which succeeded the reign of Aurungzebe, while these events happened, we are informed, that thirteen emperors were either deposed or massacred, in an equal number of years †. The imperial power, which had been usurped in every thing but the name, by the Syeds, two ambitious brothers, was at last subverted, after having been nominally offered to different branches of the royal family, whom ministerial caprice or ambition, had prompted to drag from their prison to the throne.

Thus, within the short space of a man's life, and almost in our own remembrance, the empire of India fell into anarchy and ruin; not from the external violence of foreign enemies, but from the inveteracy and extent of corruption which pervaded the whole of its members. Every province, and sometimes each district, displayed a perfidious servant of the court usurping absolute power, and practising all those extravagancies which are natural to an unprincipled mind, on its sudden elevation to absolute power ‡.

Amid those scenes of violence and distraction, the labours of the husbandman were not merely suspend-

* An Hindoo term, signifying a fourth.

† Vide Rennel's Memoir.

‡ Vol. I.

ed, but his wife and family, as well as the produce of his industry, were frequently carried away, or destroyed. The progress of a native army, in any country, is destructive, and almost equally fatal, whether it enter it with peaceable or with hostile intentions. From its assaults, neither the poverty of the peasant, nor the humble drudgeries of his sequestered lot can screen him; much less can they defend him against the still more frequent attacks of robbers, and the depredations of innumerable banditti, who every where infest a country on the downfall of police and subordination.

In many provinces of India, these mischiefs of anarchy were prolonged till they had ruined every branch of industry, and become almost incurable: in some of the native governments they continue to the present hour; for in them you still behold the peasant, when he goes abroad to the market, or to resume his labours in the field, arming himself with a tulwar, a spear, or a bludgeon, and trusting for his protection, against violence and rapine, more to the strength of his individual arm, than to the police of his country. According to the testimony of Gollam Hossein Khan, it is customary, in some districts, for the person who has been absent from his friends, to offer sacrifices to the gods for his safety, if happily he return safe to his family*. It may justly be questioned, whether, in any instance, the annals of nations

* Vide Seer Mutakhereen, a work in modern Persian.

can present to our contemplation, a great community plunged into an abyss of anarchy, equally deep and gloomy as that by which India was overwhelmed after the decline and fall of the Mogul empire. That fertile and extensive region became, in fact, an *hereditas jacens*, open to the intrusion of the first occupier, and sunk into such wretchedness, that almost any change must have proved an alleviation of its distress.

This description of the state of India, immediately preceding the period of European conquest, will not be thought over-charged in any one particular, by such as have beheld its actual condition ; and among them it may render doubtful, or perhaps destroy, the grounds of the persuasion, that a country in such deep and universal anarchy, must necessarily be injured by becoming a province to any European state. It is in Britain chiefly that the invectives of party have misled the public opinion on this subject : they who have been on the spot, and witnessed the different changes in India, have not for a moment doubted, that for a country placed in circumstances similar to those above described, to fall under the protection of a civilized government, is not a misfortune, but a kind dispensation of the Ruler of nations.

What ought to be most decisive in this argument, is, the experience and conviction of the natives themselves. They never have denied the benefits of Eu-

ropean protection, nor have withdrawn from the advantages arising from a more regular police: thousands, on the contrary, have laid aside their swords and spears, and crowded to their settlements. Now, experience uniformly guides this people, not political nor speculative opinions. Had European vicinity been hurtful, it would have been avoided: for what else has prompted them to court it, but the security of life and property which it has been found to yield?

The clamour against cruelty and provincial oppression, which has often sounded so loud through the whole of Britain, has not once been heard in Bombay, Madras, or Calcutta. These cities have continued uniformly to thrive and increase under their new masters, in spite of all the arguments that have been urged to prove that it was impossible. The last mentioned city, in particular, from having been lately a village, so unimportant, as to be wholly passed over in the assessments for the imperial revenue, as stated in the *Ayeen Acbery*, has, in about half a century, arisen to a population of upwards of half a million of souls; a rapidity of increase seldom to be met with in the records of any country, and never equalled under any of the native governments in Hindostan*.

These preliminary observations on the Mogul government, and the anarchy that succeeded it, were deemed necessary, in order to ascertain the possibility of benefitting India in any shape, while it remain-

* Vide Vol. II.

ed in the condition of a province. Should that object be found impracticable, the question ought to have been differently stated. The enquiry should have been, "how are we most creditably to abandon the sovereignty of India; or how are we to retain it with least injury to the country; and without impairing the happy influence of the wise institutions by which it has hitherto been governed?"

These introductory remarks might have been abridged, had they not served to bring into view the existing circumstances in which India is placed, and to illustrate the actual state of the British empire in that country. In proportion to the accuracy of our knowledge on these points, must prove the wisdom and practical value of every regulation offered for the improvement and civilization of our Asiatic subjects. They are farther useful by affording considerable light for the discussion of the first branch of our enquiry, which was, to consider what improvements might be made in the military establishments of India, its system of external defence and interior protection.

Previous, however, to entering upon this part of the subject, it is proper to state the first suggestion which offers itself to the mind of every person who has any practical acquaintance with the Orientals, and knows their strong attachment to antient customs. It relates to the propriety of avoiding the discussion of every point merely speculative and theoretical;

and to the necessity of guarding against the adoption, or recommendation, of plans founded merely on a preconceived system of political economy. To new-model existing institutions, and to strain them into an exact conformity with a preconceived theory of political economy, is not always either safe or practicable. On a subject so complex and intricate as the government of nations, theory is often at variance with practice, and the most plausible measures of political reform, if they do not display an evident adaptation to each case, and arise out of the real exigencies of society, are not merely idle speculations; they are often hurtful and dangerous, when attempted to be carried into practice. The benevolent views of that person who proposed as a subject of public inquiry, the means of civilizing British India, will perhaps be most effectually answered by those who can effect the removal of some known and experienced want, or provide against the approach of some impending mischief: this part of the task is, at all events, best suited to the present state of our knowledge, necessarily imperfect, regarding a country so extensive and distant as the British dominions in Asia.

Although our Hindoo subjects are patient and submissive in their general deportment to superiors; yet are they most averse to every change: this peculiarity, when considered conjunctly with the vast disproportion of their numbers to that of their conquerors, ought to afford a most impressive warning

against adopting speculative systems, or indeed attempting any sudden innovation on the general spirit of the government. That this remark has not been lightly hazarded, or gratuitously introduced, is amply proved by several facts, recorded in the annals of our own government in India: these facts have but too plainly demonstrated, that the submission of the natives has certain limits beyond which it cannot subsist, and that even the patience of the Hindoos themselves, may be put to a test which it is unable to bear. It has been long known, that the prejudices of the higher classes of the Hindoos, regarding the preparation of their food, and dressing of victuals, has prevented them from undertaking sea-voyages of any length or duration. The extension of the British territories among the islands, and through the remote parts of the continent, has at the same time rendered it necessary to transport the native troops by sea to meet the different exigencies of the service. By allowing the natives themselves to prepare their water-casks, and store all their own provisions, this prejudice, so incompatible with military duty, has been surmounted, or gradually weakened; a distant expedition by sea was therefore proposed, on a late occasion, to a certain seapoy corps, which at first seemed to assent to the proposal without any apparent murmur. A few of the higher ranks, however, on reflection, were of opinion, that it endangered their rank, by its incompatibility with their religious maxims. These men, by stating their scruples to

their comrades, in the absence of the officers, influenced the determination of the rest of the battalion. The European officers, who were ignorant of what had passed, and deeming the assent of the regiment universal and compleat, gave orders for its embarkation on the appointed day. A determined resistance ensued ; the seapoys flew to their arms, and took possession of a rising ground, where, as they refused all communication with their officers, they were under the necessity of reducing them by force of arms. In the contest many were slain on both sides ; and what is most remarkable, a native regiment was employed to execute this severe military vengeance against their countrymen, a service which they performed with fatal promptitude and alacrity. A more scrupulous regard to their religious prejudices has, since that period, almost entirely surmounted their objections to naval voyages ; and many regiments, consisting of all the different casts, have lately been employed on maritime expeditions, without any prejudice to their future rank, or violence to their religious scruples.

The native Hindoos, of all ranks, must have their food dressed and prepared by a person belonging to the same religious cast ; and during the time of dinner (almost their only meal), the greater part of their cloathing is cast off and laid aside till the conclusion of their refreshment. On actual service, and in the presence of an enemy, this custom is peculiarly re-

pugnant to European notions of discipline. Accordingly, the officer in command of our field army in 1798, issued, in orders, that such of the seapoys as were employed as guards and picquets to the camp, should not be permitted to undress either in preparing or in eating their meals. This prohibition, which appeared so necessary to the safety of his camp, the general found it necessary to withdraw in a few days, for during that short period many of the best of the native soldiers were found to have deserted the service. So inveterate are the prejudices of the native troops regarding this point, that no means have yet been devised to remove this unmilitary practice from a seapoy camp.

But the most unfortunate of all the errors that have ever arisen from ignorance, or inattention to the manners of the native troops, was that remarkable order for shaving and changing the native dress of the garrison of Vellore. The consequence has not merely been the revolt of the troops, but a dreadful massacre of almost every European in the place: unhappily the mischief arising from such an occurrence does not terminate with the fatal phrenzy excited during the moment of exasperation; the whole native army must feel itself insulted, by an order useless in its object, and to their feelings more poignant and severe, than a command issued for their instant execution.

When we reflect that the whole number of Europeans employed in all the departments of the service throughout that vast empire, does not amount to a hundredth part of the natives by whom they are surrounded, the impropriety of wantonly irritating feelings, must appear abundantly striking. The maintenance of such a multitude is merely that of opinion—an opinion of the general equity and moderation of the rulers. The moment when this opinion is destroyed, and the general detestation of our rule is excited against us, will assuredly be the last of the existence of European rule in India. Such well authenticated and recent, give lessons cannot be misunderstood : nor is it possible to draw the inference to which they lead : they strengthen us against all rash and untried experiments among the natives of Asia. They militate powerfully against thwarting their prejudices, even in apparently trivial instances, that every wanton interference with them should not merely be avoided, but the authors of them should be compelled to make amends to the natives, by becoming themselves subjects of the severest reprehension and punish-

SECTION VII.

IMPFRECTIONS OF THE MILITARY SYSTEM AMONG THE NATIVE POWERS: THE UNHAPPY FREQUEN- CY OF WAR; AND THE MEANS OF PREVENTING IT.

THE short view of the state of India which has already been given, however imperfect, clearly enough indicates the necessity of many improvements in its military establishments. The maintenance of peace, as well as the security of property, are most important objects, which, even in the most prosperous times, were never fully attained under the native governments: their compleat establishment seems imperatively to require a reduction of the military force maintained by the allied and dependent states. War has unavoidably been calamitous to every country; but the frequency of it in India, has almost uniform-

ly proved the scourge of the inhabitants, and the greatest bar to their prosperity. It has there been encouraged and promoted by the facility of raising armies among the petty chieftains, who every where usurped independent power on the downfall of the antient government. The history of Hindostan clearly points to this as the grand source of those constant dissensions, of that insecurity of life and property over the whole country, which so long perpetuated barbarism among the inhabitants.

The natives of India were long barred by the convulsions and anarchy which terminated the Mogul power, from obtaining wealth or distinction by pursuing the arts of peace. Men of family in that country, generally became soldiers of fortune ; while the commonalty, rendered by the same causes licentious and destitute, readily joined their standard. Thus the career of aggression unavoidably commenced ; for the subsistence and pay of every association of this nature, must be procured by committing depredations on the defenceless neighbourhood. The first enterprises, however insignificant, bring fresh adherents, and prepare the way for more important achievements. Nor is the progress of these military combinations checked by meeting other tribes of banditti engaged in similar pursuits ; perhaps a battle ensues, or the weaker joins the strong party ; and thus the foundation is laid of greater conquests, and of a future power, proportioned to the abilities of each chief, or to the strength of his adherents.

Such is the rise and progress of an Asiatic nation; and such, almost without a single exception, has been the origin of the different states of India. The Mah-ratta chiefs have exhibited examples of it, in almost every district from Balasore to the Indus. Of several Mahomedan kingdoms the origin is still more recent: it may be dated within our own remembrance, from the treacherous revolt of some military commander against his sovereign; from the successful usurpation of that power which he was hired to defend. Of this nature were the usurpations of Shieffdar Jung in Oude, and of Hyder Ali in the Mysore. But what belongs chiefly to our purpose is, to notice that the power of all these usurpers, however obtained, is uniformly exercised in the same manner: war is almost their only occupation, and the property of their neighbours their constant plunder. Their governments, if they can merit such a name, contain no principle of stability or order, either to secure their own tranquillity, or to compensate the people for the violence by which they were erected. Their power is as little permanent as beneficial; for it seldom remains more than one or two generations in the same family: hardly does a single year elapse without our witnessing, in India, the rise of some upstart into power, or the downfall of some of its princes.

The most obscure persons, and sometimes even women, have been tempted to grasp at those transient sovereignties. Begum Somro, the widow of a

German tradesman, possesses at present a very considerable extent of territory on the north of Delhi. In her country lie the plains of Paniput, that were lately so distinguished from being the theatre of a mighty contest between the adherents of the heathen and Mahomedan faith. These celebrated plains have, during several years, been ravaged by the rude associates of her general,—an illiterate sailor*, who deserted from the British navy. It is on the field of Carnal itself, so renowned in the Mahabarut, as the scene of antient heroism, that are now displayed the inglorious banners of this contemptible chief, and of his licentious followers.

Such are the vicissitudes and the frequency of war in India : the calamity, it must be allowed, is incident to every country ; since war is an inseparable concomitant of human associations in every stage of their progress, and under every form which they assume. It may be alledged, that a vicinity of nations, constituted like those of India, seems peculiarly incompatible with a state of peace ; and that to expect a continuance of that blessing, in such circumstances, is to look out for a change in the very principles of human nature.

Allowing to this observation every degree of weight which experience may justify, it still must be admit-

* George Thomas, an account of whose life has lately appeared in the Asiatic Register.

ted, that the gradual diminution of the irregular armies, by the controlling influence of a powerful government, directed by enlightened agents, would enable them to overawe the native chieftains, and, in proportion to its power, would check among them the reciprocation of injuries. This inference is now warranted by experience, since the British government has already, in a great measure, effected this object, in many of the provinces which have fallen under its power. Its influence has been attended with this salutary consequence in Oude, Hyderabad, and the Carnatic; though it has there been erected on the shattered remains of an empire that had suffered almost every calamity, during a period of unlimited confusion; or rather, that had been totally wrecked by the storms of a long revolution.

In Bengai, Bahar, and Orissa, those tumultuary bands which, with the name of armies, and under the pretext of collecting the revenue, had pillaged those provinces, have at last been disbanded, and a new military force has been raised, infinitely more effective, though hardly amounting to a tenth part of the antient number. In all these provinces, the limits of order have uniformly extended with the progress of European dominion; and what, as far as we know, is unexampled in their history, some of them have been kept free from the calamities of war and military depredation for the space of nearly half a century. The conduct of our governors of India merits, in these instances, a very high commendation; their

best encomium, however, will be found in the increased population and security of these provinces.

Those fears and complaints which of late have been so pathetically urged against the extension of our territory in India, seem not warranted by a perfect knowledge of that country. The enlargement of our dominions in the peninsula do not always infer a necessity of augmenting the army. Our late brilliant successes against some of the Mahratta powers, while they have extended the empire, have actually lessened its frontier. Till lately, the dominions of the Mahrattas bordered upon those of Britain, throughout the whole extent of the peninsula; but the period seems not now to be distant, when a very important diminution may be effected in the number of troops maintained by that vast military association, whose constant wars have long been the greatest scourge of Hindostan. This measure has already been practised with regard to the Peishwah, who, by engaging to maintain six thousand of our troops, must necessarily disband a greater number of his own. Should this essential arrangement be adopted, throughout the other branches of that confederacy, the British empire will then assume a tone and attitude of power, which will enable it to command the tranquillity of the peninsula *. Though

* Some persons of great discernment, and thoroughly acquainted with the state of India, have deeply regretted, that, on the conclusion of the late war with the Mahratta chiefs,

still inferior in extent to that of the Moguls, it must almost of necessity prove more energetic and tranquil; for Hindostan will then be protected by less than one tenth part of her ancient military establishment; a change of infinite importance to her prosperity. In the present tone of the public mind, such a change would, perhaps, be little relished, or, perhaps, wholly disapproved: it could not fail, however, to be highly appreciated by every person who has witnessed the ferocious achievements of native armies, during their annual excursions for the collection of revenue, or for what they term *muluck-gherée*, the acquisition of territory.

This aspect of the native governments merits the greater notice, because it forms not an accidental or temporary feature in their character, but a permanent state of society. It is a maxim among the native politicians, to regard their "State as continually at war." Hence their military chiefs are not permitted for a moment to indulge the habits of civil

Scindiah, Holkar, and Boonsla, no subsidiary treaty was concluded with these restless powers. They regard this measure as the only seal of their submission, on which we ought to depend for the future tranquillity of India. It has been adopted with almost every prince in alliance with Britain, and after an experience of thirty years, it may safely be pronounced the most effectual arrangement that has yet been devised for checking that unceasing propensity to war which so fatally characterises the whole system of Oriental policy. Since the first edition of this work, the measure here suggested, has been adopted by the India government.

life ; nor do they experience the shelter of a house for many years successively. Their camps are not broken up ; nor, except during a march, are their tents ever struck. The intervals of foreign hostility are occupied in the collection of revenue ; a measure, which in India is generally executed by a military force, and is more fertile in extensive bloodshed and barbarity, as well as in the varied scenes of distress, than an actual campaign against an avowed enemy.

The *refractory* Zemindars, (as they are denominated) upon whom the troops are let loose, betake themselves, on their approach, to a neighbouring mud fort ; one of which is erected for protection, in the vicinity of almost every village. There the inhabitants endeavour to secure themselves, their cattle, and effects, till they are compelled by force or famine to submit. The garrison is then razed to the foundation, and the village burnt, to expiate a delinquency, too frequently occasioned, solely by the iniquitous exactions of government itself.

In these military executions, some of the peasantry are destroyed ; some fall victims to famine thus artificially created, and not a few are sold, with their wives and children, to defray their arrears to the treasury, or to discharge the aggravated burdens imposed by the landholders. Such as survive, betake themselves to the woods, till the departure of their oppressors encourages them to revisit their smoking

habitations, and to repair their ruins. Thus harrassed by the injustice and barbarity of their rulers, the peasantry loose all sense of right and wrong; from want, they are forced to become robbers in their turn, and to provoke, by their fraud or violence, a repetition of the same enormities against the next annual visitation of the army.

Charges have frequently been brought against Europeans, for their ambition, their conquests, and their rapacity in the East; on some occasions, they may have been just; but a far heavier charge seems to lye against their indolence and delay in exercising, for the suppression of these cruelties, that power which the fortune of war had thrown into their hands. In Bengal, for example, several years had elapsed, from the time of its conquest, before the exercise of its wretched government was transferred from the hands of the natives to the Company's servants. The same objection might be urged against our conduct in the extensive countries of Oude and Rohilkund, although, for a period of thirty years, they have been tributary and dependent provinces, yet the irregular armies of the Vizier have been permitted to harrass the country, and enforce their exactions from the peasantry. In the latter of these provinces, this licence has so strongly prevailed, that the British government has at last been compelled to assume the immediate direction of the civil power, in order to save the remains of that people from utter extermination by the deleterious government

of Oude*. In the Carnatic also, a more prompt assumption of the civil power, would have saved much property, and many lives : and it, perhaps, might be asserted without much danger of exaggeration, that the conquest of the whole peninsula, by European arms, might have been attended with less injury to the property and population of the country, than what has been sustained by the want of police and regular government in some of its individual provinces.

None of our rulers in India, whether more or less experienced in its policy, have been inattentive to the various mischiefs resulting from native misrule ; many have deeply regretted the imperious necessity which on some occasions has interfered, to withhold them from preventing these. It is, however, only in the moment of defeat and humiliation, that a proposal for the reduction of its armies can be made with effect, even to a conquered nation : this measure, if then neglected, cannot afterwards be accomplished

* This transaction has been brought before the House of Commons as one of the charges against the Marquis Wellesley : —The necessity of the measure had, however, long since been apparent to every officer of the Bengal army, and it was strongly recommended by some of their number in 1798. When the very plan which he adopted was distinctly pointed out, in a work, by one of their number, written upon the spot, where it is mentioned as an arrangement in the future government of India, of more real importance than the conquest of many provinces. Vide Vol. II.

without the risk of bloodshed and resistance, a measure involving such weighty responsibility was generally avoided, on the principle, that if the native princes were the sole authors of their subjects misery, theirs alone was the guilt. A better plea, in defence of the India Company, may be found in the small number of its civil servants, which, in the early stages of its power, debarred it from immediately assuming the government of its conquered provinces. Its officers were not only few, but possessed of little skill in finance and political economy : a servant, tolerably expert in their factory, might prove inadequately qualified to act as an ambassador, a judge, or governor of a province.

A benevolent regard for the vanquished princes, and sympathy with their feelings, seem on some occasions to have prevented our commanders from rigorously requiring a diminution of the native armies. It belonged to their humanity, they supposed, to alleviate, as far as possible, the pain of falling grandeur, believing with the father of the British drama, that "soul and body rend not more at parting, than greatness going off;" they consoled these princes for the loss of real power, by permitting them to appear among their former subjects, attended with the whole of its outward splendor. The semblance of a native army kept on foot, in countries actually subdued, it was also imagined, would serve to screen from European nations, the real extent of British power in India. The policy of thus concealing, from

the jealous scrutiny of rival powers, the exact limits of our authority, had, perhaps, a strong influence in preventing its open exercise, and in perpetuating the evils of anarchy. From these prudential considerations, not so dishonourable in themselves, as hurtful in their consequences, the native armies have remained on the establishment of their respective chiefs till they were no longer formidable but to the defenceless husbandmen : and posterity will regret, that the sympathy so honourably exercised to the vanquished princes, had not been extended to their subjects ; and that those liberal pensions which were bestowed on the fallen sovereigns, were unaccompanied with measures of mercy, for the protection and relief of the body of the people.

To dissemble the real extent of the British power and territories in India, seems now to be equally vain and unnecessary ; and, in future, to decline exercising the prerogatives belonging to it, ought to be deemed pusillanimous. The British empire, in fact, now occupies the station and rank of the Mogul princes : To her it belongs to restore to India, even more than its former degree of order and prosperity, because she enjoys a greater reputation for humanity and rectitude of principles ; while all her neighbours in Asia regard her as possessed of a far more irresistible authority : It is her province to stand forth as the guardian of the peace and tranquillity of Hindostan ; it is hers also, to check injustice and mal-

versation in the subordinate states; and above all, it seems to be her duty to urge a diminution of their ferocious and irregular armies, with a degree of earnestness proportioned to the importance of the object.

The climate of India is equally favourable with that of China; its soil is still more fertile: with the advantage of a more regular government, and a more steady protection, it may, in a very limited time, equal that country both in wealth and population. Shall it be deemed either romantic, or over-sanguine, to hope for improvements in our Eastern Empire, which have already been actually attained in its very neighbourhood, by a people possessing far inferior advantages? The British government in India, with all the imperfection that may have crept into its administration, in so distant a region, is still far preferable to that of China. What a magnificent spectacle will Great Britain at that period afford! A small island, possessed of foreign subjects equal in number to those of the most populous empire on the globe, and carrying on with energy and spirit the improvement of a people already the most wealthy and enlightened in the annals of mankind.

Should this happy result ever flow from our connection with India, it will, in all probability, be the fruit of this very measure; a judicious reduction of the irregular troops and overgrown military esta-



ment of that peninsula. A matter of such importance, and unquestionable expediency seemed to require the length of detail given to it in this Essay, and it is held up as the initiatory step to every future improvement, and the *sine qua non* of the prosperity of India.

SECTION VIII.

OF THE MEANS OF PREVENTING SCARCITY IN HINDOSTAN.

IF the above proposed method of establishing tranquillity and full protection among our Indian subjects prove in any degree successful, it will afford many facilities of providing a more ample and regular supply of subsistence to the natives : It will invigorate their agriculture, and give new springs of activity to manufacturing industry.

Next to the frequency of war, famine is the most common and destructive calamity of Asia. Formerly, the population of whole provinces has been almost totally extirpated, and though in later times it has been less severe, two years have hardly elapsed since it was pretty widely spread on the Malabar coast, and was there attended by many of its concomitant horrors.



From the continued vicissitudes in the government, already noticed, as well as the irregular police of the country, it must be evident, that war and the want of protection have been powerful causes of the frequent recurrence of this evil, in almost every province of India. The slightest view of the rural economy of that people, will be sufficient to demonstrate that their agriculture remains in a very imperfect, or rather in a barbarous state. Various causes have, no doubt, co-operated with the instability of government, in detaining the ingenious natives in so great ignorance of this primary art of life. Among these we may, perhaps, be allowed to place their genial climate and fertile soil. It is *necessity*, not *plenty*, who has always been the parent of invention. Hence, it is in those regions that are comparatively barren, and where the inhabitants are compelled to wring by industry and skill, from niggard nature, that plenty which she does not easily bestow, that we are to look for the most perfect cultivation of the soil. Notwithstanding all that has been said of China, Great Britain seems to surpass every country in the world, in the perfection of her rural economy. This mighty advantage, she, perhaps, in some measure owes to a sky by no means propitious, and to a soil far from being originally prolific.

In India, we shall look in vain for those multiplied incitements to exertion, and encouragements to ingenuity, which here arise from a thousand sources :

but principally from a consumption almost always greater than the supply ; from the encouragements of government, its parental solicitude, and its steady protection. Whatever circumstances we select in reviewing the husbandry of the East, we almost uniformly find them adverse and depressing. " The " depressed condition of the peasantry, who, by the " inpolitic arrangement of *casts*, are herded together in the lowest class but one * ; " the want of capital ; the deductions made in kind, by the government and zemindars, which being undefined, are almost arbitrary ; the inactive character of the race ; the simple manner in which they subsist ; the privation of animal food enjoined by their superstition ; the want of fences and roads ; all these circumstances, added to the unsettled state of the country, have operated as bars to the progress of agriculture in Hindostan.

He who would restore the agriculture of India, may feel at first no small difficulty, amid so many defects, where to begin to attempt their removal ; many springs of its improvement, he will feel it necessary, not so much to strengthen and invigorate as to create. In a sketch of this kind, where proximity must be avoided, it becomes necessary to select only a few of the most prominent and conspi-

* Vide Mitchell's Essay, page 120.

cuous obstacles to the husbandry of India, the removal of which may be recommended as the objects of future regulation.

The first, and perhaps the greatest bar to spirited agriculture in the East, arises from the want of secure leases, conveying a full and specific interest in the possession of the lands, and for a period of sufficient duration to indemnify the necessary expenditures of the improver.

During the best times of the old government, the nature and variety of tenures, between the zemindar and the ryots, were complex and intricate, almost beyond belief. In many instances, the rent was payable in kind; in others, it was exacted in money: In some cases, it was paid according to a certain admeasurement of the land; but oftener, by dividing the crop between the parties in various proportions. The practical result of this intricacy of tenure has been, that hardly a single lease has proved either specific or secure. "In India, the land-rents constitute, in fact, the revenue of the state; of consequence, the management of the finances, has there a more intimate connection with agriculture than any other branch of the administration*." The tenant who had nothing to protect him against

* Vide Vol. II.

a whole army sent to collect the revenue, but the obscure clauses of an intricate lease, was perfectly defenceless, and often plundered. To this precarious situation, we must add the very limited time of his interest in the soil, which did not admit of any expensive operation for its improvement; since reimbursement must always be the work of that time which the lease itself precluded. No system can, perhaps, be devised more hostile to all improvement, than that which is now under review; it will sufficiently account for the wretched state of Indian husbandry, among such as know that this system was universal in that country; to others, the detail of it may appear of little use, but to demonstrate that no spirited husbandry can ever exist in such circumstances.

After the period of the British conquest of Bengal and Bahar, the management of the revenue was left for a considerable time in the hands of the natives; and it was then that the multitude of evils from such leases were first brought to the view of Europeans in their full enormity. A congress of all the farmers in these provinces was held annually in the capital, for the purpose of adjusting the *Bundebest*, or yearly settlement of rents and leases. The farms were exposed to public auction, and let to the highest offerer: and this competition, which appeared at first sight so favourable to the interest of the treasury,



first ruined the farmers, and in them the resources of the state.

In this early stage of the British power in the East, experience had not yet taught them how to check the malversations of the native officers of revenue. The humble condition of our officers had not yet allured men of rank and education to these remote regions. Neither the integrity nor humanity of those obscure settlers, were sufficient to resist that bribery and corruption which the natives had been accustomed to practice; and on some occasions these principles were not sufficiently strong to restrain them from cruelty. It is certain, that the native farmers often feigned inability to pay their arrears: and it is known also, that on such occasions, the application of the lash was the most frequent, and often the only remedy. If such was the tyranny exercised towards the greater zemindars, and such the fraud by which they endeavoured to counteract it, the condition of the poor peasants, their dependents, must have been still more helpless and distressing.

Various schemes for the redress of these enormities were devised and put in practice; none, however, were found of adequate effect, till the adoption of what has been termed the *mokurrery** system, or permanent settlement of the lands upon the na-

* From a Persian phrase importing *certainty*.

tive zemindars, by an act of the British Government. This spirited measure seems to strike at the root of the evil, and to meet the whole of the case. The India Company cannot, perhaps, too speedily follow up their own example in the provinces of Bengal and Bahar, by granting permanent settlements of their lands upon all the zemindars and farmers throughout the whole of their territories in India*. It is not now a matter of doubtful advantage, or of hazardous experiment: After the experience of ten years, for which period the trial was made, it has been followed with very beneficial effects; it has added considerably to the wealth and security of the agricultural branches of the community. One important fact seems to be established by the testimony of almost every eye witness, that the subjects of the British Government are now become the most comfortable and easy in their condition of any portion of the people in Hindostan. Notwithstanding the declamations of the discontented and factious in Britain, this government has effected more for the people, during the short period of its sway, than has been attained by all the rest of the native powers, since the downfall of the Imperial power. Much, however, it must be acknowledged, yet remains to be accomplished: The career of improvement

* It appears from the speech of Lord Castlereagh, on opening the India Budget in 1803, that the extension of the permanent settlement to some districts on the Malabar coast has actually commenced, and with a very promising effect.

is happily commenced ; yet many future operations must still be undertaken, and prosecuted with steadiness, before our agricultural subjects in the east can arrive at that respectability, wealth and comfort, of which their condition is capable, and which, as British subjects, they are entitled to claim and enjoy,

This leads us to notice another impediment in the way of the Hindoo peasantry, which prevents that class of people from pursuing a spirited and efficient system of husbandry : I allude to their want of capital, or more correctly speaking, their absolute poverty.

In Hindostan the great body of the people are living, and perhaps have long lived, in a state of much depression and actual penury, This is invariably the first impression which forces itself upon the mind of every European, when he personally beholds their condition. However much that protection and order, which has resulted from European intercourse, may have benefited some districts, there is still much room for adding to their comfort in all parts of the country. In the great articles of food, cloathing, and lodging, their situation is far inferior to that of any nation in the western world, not excepting the poorest in Europe.

The peculiar manners and religious maxims, of both classes of the native inhabitants, have been held

up as obstacles, and are supposed to preclude them from many of the comforts of life : This is no doubt true, to a certain extent ; but much more has been allowed to this consideration than its just weight. Their buildings are slight, paltry, and insufficient, to a degree which no allowance for manners will palliate. A Hindoo in easy circumstances, it is true, accommodates himself only with a hut ; this, however, is clean, neat, and commodious. The great bulk of that people, in the mean time, creep into wretched hovels, incapable alike of shelter or protection, and of materials so contemptible as to be hardly fit for fuel : This in their present circumstances, they must do ; not from custom or prejudice, but from poverty*.

The same thing is observable in the dress of the natives : The climate does not require the thick and substantial cloathing of Europeans ; but among individuals, whose circumstances admit of choice, there is seen some variety, with much cleanliness and elegance of decoration. When this is contrasted with the filth, the rags, or rather nakedness of ninety in a hundred of the people, it ought to be ascribed, not to the simplicity of Hindoo manners, but to the extremity of their poverty, if it may not be termed actual want.

* Vide Remarks on the Agriculture and Commerce of Bengal.

With regard to their food, says the writer from whom this statement is given, "flesh is excluded from the diet of the greater number; to all, the use of fermented liquor is forbidden by the impious dictates of their superstition; yet these circumstances will not account for the far greater part eating the millets, pulses, and other bad grain instead of white corn: nor will the circumstance, either of manners, or religious prejudice, account for the small portion of salt, spices, and *ghæe**, used at the generality of meals, since those of the opulent are so fully supplied with these ingredients."

It must, therefore, be concluded, that the Indians are poor; that they are themselves conscious of this poverty; and that they would willingly improve their condition, although they are incapable of the same persevering industry, and still more, of that energy of exertion which characterises Europeans.

A poverty so universal and so depressing as to exclude, from the great body of society, the comfort of decent cloathing, nourishing food, and convenient lodging, must be peculiarly hostile to their improvement, and particularly to the expensive operations of husbandry. Accordingly, draining, inclosing, watering and manuring the soil, are undertakings but very

* A kind of butter from the Bufalo, used at meals, and in sacrifice by the natives.

insufficiently executed, in every part of India. In many parts they are almost entirely neglected ; while all the more valuable crops, which require a rich culture and expensive preparation, seldom make any considerable portion of the agricultural produce. Wheat, sugar, opium, indigo and tobacco, are by far the most valuable crops to be met with in India ; but they are found there in much less abundance, than the number of cultivators, and the aptitude of the soil, if aided by capital, might easily produce.

To this feeble and penurious husbandry, we must ascribe also the general scantiness of such crops as are actually cultivated : for it is generally allowed, that the whole cultivated acres in India produce not more than one half of the average return reaped from a more spirited culture in Britain. The common routine of ploughing and sowing, and that most wretchedly performed, is almost all that you can ever behold on the farm of a native. On it few efforts are seen in grubbing up the constantly encroaching thicket, and seldom is even a *fallow* employed to invigorate and cleanse an exhausted soil.

On these accounts, there is seldom or rarely to be found in India, even in years of plenty, any surplus produce, or excess of supply, beyond the usual consumption of the inhabitants ; nothing, therefore, can be laid up to guard against the scarcity of an unfavourable season. Hence the Hindoos have become, more frequently than any other people, the victims of hun-

ger and absolute want. Although possessed of a territory, perhaps the most fertile upon the earth, famine, with a train of calamities the most afflicting with which providence punishes the indolence of men, has frequently been widely spread in their land. Mr Tone, a very intelligent officer, lately in the service of the Mahrattas, asserts, that in their extensive dominions, famine is the most afflicting of the many evils which they suffer. In some towns, during his residence there, it carried off a third, or even an half of all the inhabitants*. That after it had begun to rage in the interior, the terrified populace crowded to the coasts, which from the concourse of multitudes, were soon involved in the same calamity. The inhabitants were there seen wandering in the streets and highways, looking out for relief, or at least for sympathy, which a distress similar to their own every where prevented them from receiving. A father, after having witnessed the death, perhaps, of half his children, without having experienced from mankind any effort for their relief, becomes steeled against the calls of humanity, and thus avenges his own sufferings, by beholding the miseries of others without any sentiment of compassion. The wretched Mahratta, thus deprived of all humanity, is seen wandering amidst the bodies of the dead, and the groans of the dying, if not employed in robbery, at least with every symptom of indifference to their fate.

* Vide Asiatic Annual register.

Even Bengal itself, the most fertile of the provinces of India, has, in former times, often experienced the same calamity. Here, however, the frequent recurrence of the rice harvests, thrice in the year, and the foresight of Europeans, have, in latter times, shortened the duration of the evil, and prevented it from reaching the same fatal extremity.

Thus it must appear, that famine, as well as war, has contributed its share to the depression of India, and to perpetuate barbarism among its inhabitants. Amidst the horrors of despair, and of actual hunger, men are found to lose sight of justice and benevolence, and are gradually divested of the fairest attributes of human nature. Hence the civilization of the Hindoos must be preceded by a more regular supply of their wants: A more active cultivation must be excited: The *extra* produce of corn, thus obtained, must be carefully stored up, and provision made against the too frequent interruptions of tranquillity, and against the unavoidable recurrence of unfavourable seasons.

The circumstances of the British provinces seem peculiarly to invite these measures. Bengal, a kingdom six hundred miles in length, and three in breadth, is composed of one vast plain, containing the most fertile soil in the world*. Watered by many navi-

* Colonel Dow's translation of Ferishta.

gable rivers, and inhabited by fifteen millions of people, it is capable of yielding provisions for double the number of inhabitants, as appears from the numerous wastes and deserts which it contains : this province seems, therefore, marked out by the hand of nature herself, as the most favourable region on earth for the purposes of agriculture. Security of property, well defined and permanent leases, with all those multiplied encouragements to husbandry which the British Government unquestionably affords, must necessarily, in that country, invigorate the powers of cultivators, and increase the necessaries of life, as well as raw materials, from which manufactures are supplied.

Were, then, the surplus produce of the first plentiful year received from the tenant, as a part of his rent, and stored up in public granaries, till future exigencies required its expenditure, famine might not only be banished from Bengal, but a subsidiary fund might probably be provided for the rest of the British dominions in Asia, and a relief found out for those unoffending nations against the most afflicting of all the evils which it has been their destiny to suffer. The miseries arising from famine are not peculiar to India ; they were formerly often and most severely felt in Europe, and they seem to be the peculiar and distinguishing malady of all uncivilized and semibarbarous nations. It must be deeply regretted, that hitherto no general system has been adopted, to guard against this most fatal scourge of India. The

natural generosity of Britons has, however, been frequently illustrated, on particular occasions, by the munificent efforts of Government and individuals, in alleviating local and partial distresses.

A strong proof of this fact is exhibited in one of the first addresses of Sir James M'Intosh to the Grand Jury of Bombay: the following views which he presents on this subject, are at once enlarged and luminous; and as they seem to point out some remedy for this evil, are worthy of his vigorous understanding and benevolent heart. "What the causes are, which in all ages seem to have rendered famine so frequent and so severe in India, is a question of great curiosity, and indeed of great practical importance, but not very fit to be examined in this place, and to which I have not yet the means of giving a satisfactory answer. One general observation, however, I will venture to make. The same unfortunate state of things existed among our ancestors in Europe four or five centuries ago. The same unfavourable seasons which now only produce scarcity, then almost uniformly produced famine. Various causes have, no doubt, contributed to the great and happy change which has since taken place; all of them connected with the progress Europeans have made in the arts, institutions, and manners of civilized life: But the principal cause is, beyond all doubt, commerce; for only one, of two expedients against dearth, can be imagined; either we must consume less food, or we must procure more. In gene-

ral both must be combined ; we must have recourse both to retrenchment and importation.

“ Both these purposes are effected by commerce. The home trade in grain reduces consumption ; and this it does by that very operation of enhancing its price, which excites so much clamour among the vulgar of all ranks ; and the foreign trade in grain makes the produce of one country supply the wants of another. Thus famine is banished from what may be properly called the commercial world.

“ So powerful and so beneficial are the energies of that great civilizing principle of commerce, when counteracted, as it is everywhere, by the stupid prejudices of the people, and by the absurd and mischievous interference of government, it has yet accomplished so great a revolution in the condition of so large a portion of mankind, as totally to exempt them from the dread of the greatest calamity which afflicted their ancestors. Whether commerce would effect so great a change in India, I shall not undertake to determine. Perhaps there are physical difficulties which are insuperable, and others which arise from the condition of the people, and their habits, which it would be extremely difficult to conquer. These certainly must diminish or retard such a beneficial change. But to return from these generalities, on which I should not, perhaps, have dwelt so long.

“ You are well acquainted, that, from a partial failure of the periodical rains of 1802, and from a more compleat failure in 1803, a famine has arisen in the adjoining provinces of India, especially in the territories of the Peishwah, which I shall not attempt to describe, and which I believe no man can truly represent to the European public, without the hazard of being charged with extravagant and incredible fiction. Some of you have seen its ravages: all of you have heard accounts of them from accurate observers. I have only seen the fugitives that fled before it, and have obtained an asylum in this island. But even I have seen enough to be convinced that it is difficult to overcharge a picture of Indian desolation. ’

“ I shall now state to you, from authentic documents, what has been done to save these territories from the miserable condition of the neighbouring country. From the 1st of September 1803, to the present time, there have been imported, or purchased by government, four hundred and fourteen thousand bags of rice; and there remain one hundred and eighty thousand contracted for, which are yet to arrive; forming an aggregate of nearly six hundred thousand bags, and amounting in value to fifty lacs of rupees, or £.60,000 sterling. During the same time, there have been imported by our merchants 480,000 bags of rice, making in all an importation of a million of bags, and amounting in value to £.100,000 sterling.

“ The effects of this importation on our own territories, it is not very difficult to estimate. The population of the islands of Bombay, Salsette, and Caranja, and of the city of Surat, I designedly under-rate at 400,000. I am entitled to presume, that, had they continued subject to native governments, they would have shared the fate of the neighbouring provinces, which are still so subject. I shall not be suspected of any tendency towards exaggeration, by any person who is acquainted with the state of the opposite continent, when I say, that in such a case an eighth of that population must have perished. Fifty thousand human beings have, therefore, been saved from death in its most miserable form, by the existence of a British government in this island. I conceive myself entitled to take credit for the benefits of the whole of the importation; for that which was imported by private merchants, as well as for that which was imported directly by the government; because, without the protection and security enjoyed under a British government, that commercial capital and credit would not have existed, by which the private importation was effected.

“ The next particular which I have to state, relates to those unhappy refugees who have found their way into our territories. From the month of March to the present time, such of them as could labour, have been employed in useful works, and have been fed by government. The monthly average of these persons since March, is 6125 in Bombay; 3162 in Sal-

sette, and in Surat a considerable number ; but from that city I have seen no exact returns.

“ Many of these miserable beings, are, on their arrival here, wholly unable to earn their subsistence by any, even the most moderate labour. They expire on the road before they can be discovered by the agents of our charity. They expire in the very act of being carried to the place where they are to receive relief. To obviate, or at least to mitigate these dreadful evils, a humane hospital was established by government for the relief of those emigrants who were unable to labour. The monthly average of those who have been received since March, in Bombay, is 1030, in Salsette, about 100, and probably about 300 in Surat.

“ I myself visited this hospital, in company with my excellent friend Dr Scott, and I witnessed a scene of which the impression will never be effaced from my mind. The average monthly mortality of the establishment is dreadful ; it amounts to 480. At first this would seem to argue some monstrous defects in so new an establishment, hastily provided against so unexampled an evil ; those who are accustomed to make due allowance for human frailty, would find more to lament than to blame in such defects. But when it is considered that almost all these deaths occur in the first four or five days after admission, and that scarcely any disease has been observed among the patients but the direct effect of famine, we shall

probably view the mortality as a proof of the deplorable state of the patients, rather than of any defects of the hospital; and instead of making the hospital answerable for the deaths, we shall deem it entitled to credit for the life of every single individual.

“ Those who know me will need no assurances that I have not made these observations from a motive so unworthy of my station, as that of paying court to any government. I am actuated by far other motives. I believe that knowledge of subjects so important, cannot be too widely promulgated. I believe, if every government on earth were bound to give an annual account, before an audience whom they respected, and who knew the facts of what they had done during the year, for improving the condition of their subjects, that this single, and apparently slight circumstance, would better the situation of all mankind : and I am desirous, if any British government in India should ever, in similar calamitous circumstances, forget its most important and sacred duties, that this example should be recorded for their reproach and disgrace.

“ Upon the whole, I am sure, I considerably understate the fact, in saying, that the British government in this island, has saved the lives of one hundred thousand persons ; and, what is more important, that it has prevented the greater part of the misery through which they must have passed before they found re-

fuge in death ; besides the misery of all those who loved them, or who depended upon their care.

“ The existence, therefore, of a British government in Bombay in 1804, has been a blessing to its subjects. Would to God, that every government in the world could, with truth, make a similar declaration! Many of you have been, and many will be entrusted with authority over multitudes of your fellow creatures. Your means of doing good will not, indeed, be so great as those of which I have now described the employment and the effects: But they will be considerable. Let me hope, that every one of you will be ambitious to have it to say to your own conscience, ‘ I have done something to better the condition of the people intrusted to my care.’ I take the liberty to assure you, that you will not find such reflections among the least agreeable or valuable part of that store which you lay up for your declining years.”

SECTION IX.

OTHER SUBSIDIARY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE COMFORT OF THE NATIVES OF INDIA.

WHATEVER measures might best cherish moral and benevolent principles among the agents of our government in India, will be found of all expedients the most effectual for securing the comfort and welfare of the inhabitants. Such measures are perhaps not susceptible of an exact enumeration, or of definite regulations; their nature, however, cannot be misunderstood, while their importance must be felt universally.

Their operation will commence, whenever men of strict integrity and of acknowledged benevolence are selected for appointments in the service of the India

Company ; whenever the malversation of its agents shall be promptly followed by dismissal and punishment, and when the merits of long and faithful service are adequately rewarded.

In a remote country, amidst many new and untried situations, regulations cannot be formed to meet the exigencies of each case ; and if such regulations did exist, the care and presence of a superintending power is wanting to enforce their observance. In such circumstances, integrity of principle, and benevolence of heart, forms the only supplementary code which can give energy and effect to the whole system. The power of these principles is paramount to that of law ; their force more binding than all the penalties of the statute-book.

An European no sooner arrives in India, however inferior his department may be in the service, than he is invested by the natives themselves with a sort of moral discipline and authority. From him, as a kind of magistrate, they seek redress of their wrongs ; to him they appeal for the settlement of their petty differences, and to him, in every case, such as are near look for protection. They are remarkably alive to the sense of obligation, and are strongly attached by benefits. What but a strong love of justice can qualify a man for such a situation ? what but the utmost disinterestedness can make him despise those humble gifts and gratuities which the mean selfishness of his former rulers have taught the Indian to offer ?

How often have the miseries of famine been alleviated by a benevolence which was unprompted by any enactments of human law? How frequently have its ills been aggravated by a cold-hearted avarice which all its enactments could not controul?

If the Directors of the Honourable Company are aware how much it imports themselves to be guided by a strict integrity in the choice and appointment of their servants, they will soon discern a wide and fertile field for their own exertions, and for the supply of the innumerable wants of their subjects. Such men alone will then be promoted to stations in the East as are capable of supporting the British character and name; men, by whose conduct its wonted generosity and honour will be in no danger of being tarnished. Such men will not repel the humble solicitations of their Indian dependents with sullen indifference; they will not offend their prejudices by a contempt or violation of their institutions; nor will they in any case subject their rights, their property, and enjoyments to the destructive influence of a stern and capricious tyranny. Notwithstanding their strict adherence to certain frivolous usages, and their fastidious regards for certain meats and drinks, the Hindoo character in every great and essential particular, resembles that of other men: Of all the food they ever receive, that from which they derive the truest nourishment, and for which they have the sweetest relish, is the "Milk of human kindness."

The education of the youth who are destined for the Indian service, and to govern the natives, ought, in the first place, to be directed to the formation of sound, moral, and religious principles. The individual who carries to the East, and maintains there a character of unblemished rectitude and humanity, will be found possessed of qualifications of far greater value to himself, as well as to his dependents, than if he had either the eloquence of Cicero, or the science of Newton. It should also be remembered that it is for business, and not for the pursuits of literature, that nine out of ten Europeans of every description visit the eastern empire: to qualify them for conducting its various and important services ought to be the leading object of education among such as seek for appointments in India. The greater part of the Honourable Company's servants themselves, are either employed in the diplomatic, fiscal, judicial, or military departments of government.—The designation of *writers*, however descriptive it may have formerly been of the clerks of their factories, is certainly no longer applicable to the civil servants, as administrators of an extensive empire.

In order to qualify them to act as magistrates in these important stations, a knowledge of mankind, of the principles of jurisprudence and of the Mahommedan and Hindoo laws, seems more essentially requisite, than an acquaintance with speculative mathematics, or the Sanscreeet and Arabic languages. These last, however, were the grand objects of atten-

tion in the expensive College of Fort-William.— Many of the junior servants who were compelled to attend there, had already made proficiency in all the branches of a regular education at the British Universities. It may readily be conceived with what reluctance they consented to throw away the most important years of their life, in acquiring a few frivolous and unimportant branches of learning, under the tuition of Professors much less accomplished than themselves. Yet the loss of time, valuable as it is, ought, perhaps, to be less dreaded than the eminent risk, amidst a crowd of idle young men, of contracting habits of dissipation and vice. The career of their public duty can never be so auspiciously begun, as amidst that diffidence and anxiety regarding themselves, which the youth naturally feel, when they first enter upon a situation entirely new ; and when their industry and virtue are yet unimpaired by the fascinating allurements of Oriental indulgence.

Under the head of supplying a regular fund of subsistence, and of administering to the comfort of the inhabitants of India, we must advert to the necessity of securing an adequate price for their commodities. Industry among them can only be stimulated by conferring on labour a prompt and just reward. Commodities can never be manufactured in proportion either to the skill or the number of hands, unless they are submitted to a fair competition of the purchasers ; and not estimated by the contracted and selfish views of monopolists.

This aspect of the subject suggested to the celebrated Dr Adam Smith, the universal freedom of trade as a canon of commercial regulation. Every political writer, since his work was published, has poured out indiscriminate reprobation of all monopolies ; without adverting that the India Company, in fact, does not enjoy a monopoly of the Indian commerce, neither in a practical or legal sense. It is a public body into which any private individual may enter, by purchasing a share of its stock : individuals are also legally entitled to a certain portion of their tonnage, to import goods for their own behoof : and in the last place, there are many important articles of commerce to which the restrictions of its charter do not extend.

That able statesman who framed the last regulations for this trade, had to contend with the opinions of speculative writers on the one hand, and with the monopolizing jealousy of merchants on the other. Happily, he too seems to have been a philosopher, who could qualify and model the plans of theorists by the dictates of experience. His regulations held a middle course ; they were accommodated to the new exigencies of an increasing trade ; they softened the restrictions of monopoly ; while they avoided those mischiefs that too often are the result of undigested speculation. Fostered alike by the results of enlightened theory, and the dictates of matured experience, our Indian commerce has increased, is still

advancing, and, it may be hoped, will not soon be diminished.

That these assertions are not gratuitous, nor even rashly hazarded, might easily be shewn from the present state of commerce between Asia and Europe. It is much greater than in the time of Alexander or of the Romans ; and it manifestly surpasses the extent to which it was ever carried in the most prosperous days of the Mogul empire. When Pliny complained of the luxury and extravagance of the Roman ladies in purchasing the gems and perfumes of the East, their annual expenditure in these articles did not amount to a tenth part of the sum paid by modern Europe for piece goods alone. With the China trade, which at present amounts to several millions, the whole nations of antiquity were almost entirely unacquainted. The luxuries which are in modern times diffused among the various nations of Europe and America, were in their days confined almost exclusively to the more wealthy citizens of Rome. The two preceding centuries, which have ushered in so many important changes into the western hemisphere, have been most peculiarly distinguished by the rapid advancement of commercial knowledge : the sciences, during this period have proceeded rapidly from their infancy to youth and manhood ; among these, navigation and commerce have taken the lead ; while the indolent Asiatics, by contributing their elegant manufactures, have accelerated this progress, even in defiance of their own pre-

vailing habits, and their veneration for ancient customs.

3. The provision of an adequate subsistence for the numerous population of British India seems to require further, that European skill and enterprise should direct the natives to several new branches, both of husbandry and manufactures, which, although known in Europe, have not yet been introduced into Asia. If we advert to the very short period in which the British empire has subsisted in this quarter of the world, much of what is here recommended will be found to have been already accomplished; far more extensive benefits, however, of this nature, may yet be conferred, by pursuing steadily this useful object. The culture of the potatoe, till lately unknown in the East, has already been introduced, with considerable success, in many districts within our provinces.

This vegetable, which has proved so remarkably beneficial to the poor, a class which in every country contains nine-tenths of the human race, if cultivated in India to a sufficient extent, would alone eradicate famine from every corner of the land; for, wherever this root hath been planted, though in less favourable circumstances than those of India, it has proved a permanent benefit to the lower ranks, by placing them almost beyond the reach of famine. The overflowing of the Ganges, and other streams, is absolutely necessary to the growth of rice over a vast ex-

ient of country. This contingent, upon which the food of so many millions depends, is at once irregular and uncertain. The culture of potatoes would remove the danger of this uncertainty; since a dry season, so hurtful to the rice crops, is the most favourable to this vegetable, which nature seems to have pointed out, with her own hand, to be the proper substitute for that staple article of oriental diet.

Although the use of potatoes, as food, violates no prejudice of the natives of India, it would, perhaps, be too sanguine to expect, that their very limited capital and industry, will turn this article to so much account, in feeding hogs, poultry, and cattle, as is done in Britain and Ireland; but if, either by example, or the force of encouragement, the use of this food shall ever become as universal among the Hindoos, as it is in these parts of the united kingdom, the Europeans of the present times, will have the satisfaction of making some atonement for the mischiefs committed by their ancestors, during the two preceding centuries, in America.

4. The culture of sugar, and of indigo, though practised among the Hindoos from time immemorial, has never till lately been conducted with any degree of spirit or success. The culture of the latter plant, in particular, had long been disused, and had been almost forgotten, though its botanic, as well as common appellation, clearly enough indicates that Hin-

dostan was the original place of its growth*: so rapidly, however, had its culture been revived within the last twenty years, by a few enterprising Europeans, that in 1796 it constituted one of the most valuable exports from India, amounting in quantity, to nearly four millions of pounds; and continuing still to increase, and to enrich many cultivators, both native and European.

The extension of the sugar culture seems a measure still more practicable and advantageous than that of indigo. There are few districts in the Company's extensive dominions, where there are not large tracts of soil suited to this article. Although it be known from experience, that the introduction of any new branch of agriculture among the natives, is a matter of great difficulty, yet this obstacle would not always occur, since there are many large districts in which the culture of the sugar cane has been practised from time immemorial, and where the increase and improvement of this valuable branch of husbandry, may easily be carried to the greatest extent. In the Peddapore districts, along the banks of the Elyseram, there is already, under culture for sugar, no less than 700 vissums, or 1,400 acres of land; and this quantity might be increased to whatever extent a growing demand for this commodity might require. If we may judge from the statements of Mr Beck-

* *Indigofera Tinctoria*; Vide Syst. Nat. Linn.

ford and Dr Roxburgh *, the produce of this Indian district is far more abundant than that of Jamaica itself: there the average produce of an acre of cane is stated to rise from fourteen to twenty cwt. whereas, in Peddapore, according to Dr Roxburgh, the produce has been no less than five thousand weight, or more than double.

The extent of sugar-lands in the Peddapore district, bears, however, only a small proportion to those vast tracts in Bengal, Bahar, and Oude, where a space far greater than all the West India isles, might soon be brought under this crop, which is perhaps the richest of all the products of agricultural labour, and in India constitutes unquestionably the *chef d'oeuvre* of Hindoo husbandry.

The refuse of a sugar crop, without employing it for the purpose of distillation, affords a wholesome supply of food, to both servants and labouring cattle; and in this application is productive of more real benefit, than if converted into ardent spirits. It need not, however, be apprehended, that the extension of the sugar culture will, in India, give any new bias to the morals of the people; for in almost every part of that wide country, the natives are already but too well acquainted with the process of making arrack and rum; and it is well ascertained,

* Vide Asiatic Annual Register, and Beckford's Jamaica.

that they were acquainted with all the effects of these liquors on the human constitution, before they had received any instruction from Europeans.

At a period, then, like the present, when the produce of India has become more than ever an object of importance, in consequence of the unsettled state of some of the best of the sugar islands in the West Indies, every enquiry which may tend to open new sources, from whence that wholesome commodity may be procured at the cheapest rate, is of national consequence, as well as of immediate benefit to the agriculture of our Indian subjects.

5. The manufacture of leather, and of the various articles which are fabricated from that substance, as saddles, harness, shoes, and other commodities, constitutes another branch of industry, for which the Hindoos are likely to be indebted to their European instructors. About two millions of cows and bufalos are supposed to die annually from age, in the provinces of Bengal and Bahar*. The hides of these animals have hitherto been turned to very little account, though large and valuable. This has been occasioned by the religious prejudices of the Hindoo, which not only forbid him to kill the cow, but prevent him almost entirely from deriving any benefit from its skin, either as an article of commerce, or as a material of many useful manufactures. Till the

* Vide Colebrook's Remarks.

countenance of European settlers in some degree relieved the depressed condition of the *Chumars*, (leather workers) they were the most despised class of the whole community, and not allowed even to converse with any of the casts. The intercourse of Europeans, from which they are not debarred by prejudices of that nature, has tended much to improve their skill in tanning and manufacturing leather; and the demand for many articles of their trade, has afforded some a more comfortable subsistence, as well as a more respectable station in society.

6. But by far the most conspicuous proof of the benefit to be derived by the native Indians, from European science and skill, is displayed by the present state of ship-building, and the introduction of naval architecture into India. Prior to the period in which the European settlements were made in Asia, the skill of the natives was barely competent for the construction of *donies*, *burrs*, *budgerrows*, and the various but wretched craft which has continued to ply upon the Ganges, for more than two thousand years. Their skill in ship-building has, however, so rapidly improved during the short period of European intercourse, that they have for several years been capable of constructing some of the largest and most valuable merchantmen that have ever yet appeared upon the ocean.

Ships of war are also built for the protection of commerce, of sufficient size and force for every pur-

pose; and of such amazing durability, that some are still employed against the enemy, after a previous service of thirty years. What some time past would have been regarded as the vain boast of the most romantic spirit of innovation, is now a fact established by experience; and the Hindoos, formerly unknown as a naval power, have been enabled, by a few years patient instruction by superior skill, to add considerably to the strength of the most powerful navy in the world.

The means of equipping a strong maritime force, a matter of such essential moment to every commercial country, must in future be greatly facilitated by our Indian resources, as well as by the shipping actually built there. Those numerous substitutes which have lately been found out in India, for flax and hemp, may hereafter render the provision of cordage comparatively an easy task; it is hardly possible, were it even necessary, which it is not, to enumerate the various products actually raised in India, or which might be raised there, to augment the industry of its own inhabitants, and increase the means of their subsistence, as well as to enlarge the resources of Great Britain.

From Hurdwar to Cape Comorin, this nation now possesses actual dominion, or powerful influence; and this vast tract of country, which contains almost every variety of soil and climate, will probably be found capable of producing every article which has

hitherto been deemed peculiar to China or America. It must be regarded as a wide and untried field, now submitted to experiments, which the too indolent natives were incapable of making; it may also be found blest with many valuable resources, of which, from their unambitious and listless nature, they would probably never have availed themselves. Many of their defects, such as their ignorance of maritime affairs, and their want of enterprise, Great Britain, more than any nation upon earth, is qualified to supply. That they have fallen under the guidance and instruction of a great and enlightened nation, is, perhaps, one of those destinations of Providence, of which, as we are incapable of foreseeing the consequences, we must remain unable fully to appreciate the wisdom. Although we cannot decide on this reference of our subject without presumption, we may still retain this satisfactory conclusion, till experience contradict the inference, that as India contains plants and insects similar to those of other countries in the same latitudes, she must also possess every requisite for similar productions, to exercise the industry of the manufacturer, and to reward with subsistence every class of her labourers.

Great Britain has for many centuries availed herself of her situation, naturally favourable to commerce. This part of her economy she has fostered by every measure which the wisdom of her legislature could devise; and it has at length been carried to an extent hitherto unequalled in the annals of our

race. The cultivation of her vast Indian territories, it may be presumed, will not be always left to the feeble exertions of the illiterate peasants of Hindostan, at least without the help of her instruction.

It has been reserved for our own times, to witness the establishment of a board of competent officers, to direct the exertions of a great nation, in the improvement of its soil, and to assist its husbandmen in the most important of all arts—that of providing food. The eyes of Europe have been turned to this institution, the first, it is believed, that has ever been made, on a great scale, in favour of agriculture. British India, it may be hoped, will not be deemed too remote to interest its attention. Its improvement may indeed be regarded as an arduous task; yet an effort more difficult has been successful, and in circumstances not dissimilar. History attests, that Britain when first invaded by the Romans*, only produced small quantities of corn on her coasts. Even so late as the reign of Severus, tillage was altogether unknown, in those parts which lay between his wall and that of Antoninus. Britain, however, though a distant, and at that period a semibarbarous province, under the dominion of that enterprising and great people, soon became, in fact, the granary of the western empire: it exported immense quantities of corn for the subsistence of the legions in Germany

* Vide Caesar's Commentaries.

and Gaul*. Yet surely, India, under all its disadvantages, is a more promising subject to afford such a supply, than Great Britain in the days of Julius Caesar, or even under the reign of the Emperor Severus. What Rome actually accomplished in favour of one of her distant dependencies, who will assert the impossibility of Great Britain effecting for hers? Her means are more various, while her subjects are not less tractable; and however romantic such speculations of improvement may seem, it cannot be forgotten that five years have yet scarcely elapsed, since we received from India considerable supplies of rice, to alleviate the distress of Britain.

* Vide Agricultural Report for Westmoreland.

SECTION X.

SOME EXAMPLES OF THE GREAT DEFECTS IN THE MORAL AND RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS OF THE ORIEN- TALS.

THE salutary influence of sound moral and religious principles on the happiness of individuals, and on the general prosperity of large communities, has seldom been questioned even by scepticism itself. Some have ventured so far, as to assert that the maintenance of virtue among the magistrates and subjects of a state, is the only thing worth pursuing after, in the arrangement of its government: that its forms are indifferent, that *form* being always preferable, which is most virtuously administered.

Without discussing the truth of this assertion, this may surely be admitted, that to confer upon its in-

habitants a purer code of moral doctrines, and a more rational system of religious faith, would be rendering to British India a very important service : its present circumstances considered, this benefit would appear one of the most important which its rulers could bestow. The Christian religion, although it has not in any country been steadily agreed to in the whole of its original spirit, and to the full extent of its salutary injunctions ; and although it has perhaps been still less perfectly understood, regarding it as a system of doctrine, it has nevertheless exalted those nations who have professed it, to a higher rank than any other scheme of faith proposed to human belief. It may, therefore, be deemed a wise and happy dispensation of the Ruler of nations, that he has permitted so large a portion of Asia to fall under the dominion of Christian states ; and that the knowledge, at least, of a sounder system of duty should thus be brought nearer the immediate reach of their attainment.

It must also, however, be regarded as a fortunate destination for the inhabitants of Hindostan, that they did not fall under the dominion of Europeans at an earlier period, before the influence of knowledge and philosophy had dispelled the gloomy bigotry of the western world, and rendered it less incapable of forbearance to opposite opinions. Had the Hindoos been conquered at an earlier period, by only a few centuries, the obstinacy of their own faith, and the intolerant spirit of the times, would, in all probability,

have subjected them to the same cruelties which were exercised against the natives of America a short time before, or to the still more severe persecution which the Indians themselves had experienced from their Mahomedan conquerors.

The moderation of the present times, leaves no room for the apprehension, that any measures of violence or cruelty will be again practised for the conversion of our heathen subjects, either in the eastern or western hemisphere : the danger becomes now of an opposite kind, since moderation has also its extremes ; the danger appears to be, that it may beget a total indifference to the religious condition of the people. To animate the supineness of the age, with a degree of zeal necessary for propagating the salutary system of its own belief, it must be prompted by a full persuasion of the hurtful tendency of the Brahminical superstition, of its discouragements to knowledge, and its injury to virtue. The indifference of some to every mode of religious faith, may render it difficult to convince *them* of *all*, or perhaps of *any* of the evils resulting from that gross and inveterate superstition *, though no person who has carefully

* It is curious to observe how the indifference, or rather the dislike of some old settlers in India, is expressed against the system of their forefathers. It is compared with the Hindoo institutions, with an affectation of impartiality ; while, in the meantime, the latter system is extolled in its greatest puerilities and follies : its grossest fables are always asserted to convey some hidden, but sound lessons of wisdom. They in-

examined Indian manners, can possibly doubt of this fact in his own mind.

On this point there can be, among impartial observers, but one sentiment ; they must be very generally convinced, that though the conquests made by Europeans are gradually operating as a remedy against many of the cruelties and exactions of a barbarous government in these countries, yet that there is another class of evils, hardly less numerous, flowing from fanaticism and superstition among the people, for which there has not yet been found any alleviation, much less any adequate cure.

1. The very structure and arrangement of society itself, is in India formed by the religious system, which there interferes with every temporal as well as spiritual concern of its professors. It thus lays, in its very foundation, the grand obstacle to every improvement of the condition of the people. It has divided the whole community into four great classes,

veigh against the schisms, disputes, and differences of the western world, ascribing them solely to their religious dogmata. They palliate the most fanatical and most painful of the Hindoo rites, and never fail in discovering some salutary influence which they shed upon society. Wrapt up in devout admiration of the beauty and sublimity of the bedahs, they affect to triumph in their supposed superiority over the simplicity of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. This affectation is the more ridiculous, because it is indulged by those who pretend to great taste, and profound knowledge of Sanscreeet learning.

and stationed each class between certain walls of separation, which are impassable by the purest virtue, or by the most conspicuous merit; and while the Hindoo in almost every thing else has submitted to the will of his conquerors, here alone he has been invincible; no change of his political condition, no rigour of persuasion, has been able to force him to swerve from the institutions of his cast.

“ He, then,” says a late writer*, “ who is fortunate enough to be born a Brahmin, being placed by his birth in the possession of all that he can desire, finds no necessity for exerting the faculties either of his mind or body; it is even unneedful that he should protect his rank from the envy or attacks of his inferiors: that rank is guarded by the adamant wall of superstitious veneration, which, from the earliest ages, it has been thought equally impious and useless to assail. Those of the Khatry, Byse, and Soodera classes, are equally placed, by the same imperious sanction, between two limits; beyond the one they dare not advance, below the other they dread not to fall: thus hope and fear, the two great stimulants of human exertion, are entirely taken away. Such a religious obligation is, perhaps, calculated to preserve internal peace; but while it thus assists the first steps towards civilisation, it so debases the mind, and lulls it to so languid a repose, that all the higher approaches are entirely precluded.”

* Vide Cockburn's Essay.

The institution of casts may therefore be regarded as the cause why civilisation had so early stopped in India, and why the different attainments made progressively by other nations, are not found among the Hindoos, whose manners have been wholly stationary, from the earliest ages to the present times. It is, however, far easier to ascertain the wide and baneful influence of such a system, on the enterprise and improvement of society, than to discover any adequate or safe means by which this immense colossus of superstition may either be weakened or overthrown.

2. The number of *enthusiasts* and *vagrants*, of all descriptions, who pervade the whole of the peninsula on religious pretences, is so great, as not only to check the operations of rural industry, but frequently to unhinge the police, and disturb the government under the most powerful sovereigns. Tavernier has estimated the number of these wandering devotees at an hundred and ten thousand; but from the most authentic accounts, as well as the observation of the most accurate of our countrymen, his statement is probably below their actual amount. Mr Richardson, author of the Persian and Arabic Dictionary, has characterized these vagrants, under the article *Fakeer*, in the following manner: "In this singular class of men, who in Hindostan despise every sort of clothing, there are a number of enthusiasts, but a far greater proportion of knaves; every vagabond who has an aversion to labour, being received into a fra-

ternity which is regulated by laws of a secret and uncommon nature. The Hindoos view them with a wonderful respect, not only on account of their sanctified reputation, but from a substantial dread of their power. The Fakeer pilgrimages often consist of many thousands of naked saints, who exact, wherever they pass, a general tribute; while their character is too sacred for the civil power to take cognizance of their conduct. Every invention of perverted ingenuity is exhausted by them in distorting and deforming nature: some, of the most elevated enthusiasm, strike off even their own heads, on great solemnities, as a sacrifice to the Ganges, which they worship."

During the reign of Aurungzebe, while that monarch was marching into the Deccan, his baggage was attacked and plundered by a tribe of those banditti, almost within view of the whole army. In the time also of this most powerful of all the Mogul Emperors, these Fakeers, instigated by Bistemia, an old woman of great wealth, raised a formidable rebellion. This woman was followed after, chiefly on account of her high reputation in the arts of magic and sorcery: her enchanted pot was the skull of an enemy, in which *owls, bats, snakes, and human flesh* formed a broth for her frantic followers*. These fanatics, to the number of twenty thousand, were led on by Bistemia, and were opposed by a favourite general of the Emperor, who was instructed to resist her with her own

* Vide Vol. II.

weapons, and was therefore furnished with spells, formed by the hands of Aurungzebe himself. This artifice, in this instance, was successful ; for a battle ensued, in which Bistemia and her whole army were cut off.

Even in our own times, and within the British territories, these irregularities still prevail ; and several bands of the same description have lately been dispersed by our troops. During the celebrated march of General Goddard across the peninsula, several thousands of Fakeers, whom he calls Pandurams, attacked and drove away his baggage-cattle ; these, however, he soon recovered, by attacking and pursuing the robbers in his turn, of whom some were killed : two thousand more hovered on his rear, till the experience of their brethren taught them to keep at a more respectful distance.

No efforts of the British power or policy have hitherto provided an adequate remedy for the mischiefs arising from this spirit of fanaticism ; which, by abstracting so many hands from useful labour, and by committing so many depredations upon property, continues to operate very sensibly against the improvement and prosperity of India. That remedy applied by Aurungzebe, and some of the emperors before him, is not only precarious and uncertain, but the most unlikely ever to be adopted by the present government of the country. It was his policy, as well as that of Acbar and Jehanguire, to assume an

high tone of fanaticism, and to assert such strong pretensions to sanctity, as might either foil these religionists, in a contest with their own weapons, or attract the veneration of their ignorant subjects. It was for this strange purpose, that the great Acbar, the Augustus of the East, pretended to the gift of inspiration, and the power of working miracles. Surely, a far more dignified and rational measure would have been, to endeavour, by diffusing knowledge, to dispel this dreadful gloom of fanaticism from the minds of his people.

There are other parts of the Brahminical superstition, which are not merely hurtful to the police of the country, but incompatible with the exercise of the judicial power. Persecutions for witchcraft, sorcery and necromancy, which in former times disgraced the criminal codes of several European nations, remain in full force in the East; and there certainly cannot be given a more infallible indication of barbarous jurisprudence, nor can there perhaps exist any institution more hostile to reason and the principles of justice. The cruel trial by ordeal is of the same nature; and the continuance of it in India, among many other circumstances, displays a striking example of that barbarism which is still perpetuated in the country by the grossness of its superstition. The minuteness of description employed in defining the different modes of this trial, at once proves the universality and frequency of the practice; nor can we console ourselves on the prospect of its disuse;

since the present Governor-General has been obliged to interfere, in order to stop its frequency within the jurisdiction of the British courts of justice.

But the juridical power has often been disturbed in the British provinces, by the religious guides of the people themselves; famed as they have always been for humanity and submissive conduct. The inviolability of a Brahmin is a fixed principle of the Hindoo system, apparently the corner stone of that immense fabric. To deprive a Brahmin, therefore, of life, either by direct violence, or by causing his death in any mode, is a crime which admits of no expiation. Here, then, is a maxim which places at once a whole class of society, in some measure beyond the reach of justice.

The practical influence of this maxim reaches greatly beyond this class; the institution of d'herna, which is tantamount to a caption, or arrest, is founded upon it. This expedient is used by the Brahmins to gain a point in litigation, which they cannot otherwise accomplish. The person who adopts this mode of prosecution, proceeds to the door of the defendant, and there sits down in d'herna, with poison, a dagger, or some other instrument of suicide, and threatens his own destruction, if his adversary shall attempt to escape from his house. By the rigour of practical discipline, the Brahmin fasts during this process; and imperious superstition requires that the creditor shall fast also, and thus they both re-

main till the institutor of the d'herna obtain satisfaction.

The Brahmin who makes this suit, seldom attempts it without a resolution to persevere, and he rarely fails ; since the party arrested, who would suffer him to perish with famine, would incur never to be expiated either by himself or his family.

This practice, which is very general beyond British provinces, is said to have become frequent in Benares, and other places within the jurisdiction of our courts. The interference of the government and of the resident of that province, has, however, on some occasions, been insufficient to check it. In doing this, it has generally been deemed prudent to avoid coercion, lest the appearance of force would drive the claimant to suicide*. The disapproval of such an act would not attach merely to the officer of justice, but to government itself.

Although it is not to be inferred, from what has been said, that this practice is universal, or even common in India, yet many instances are known to occur under the native governments; and even in the British India itself the Brahmins are seen still to obtain redress from the Hindoos by placing themselves before the door of the house, with a declaration to remain there till

* Vide Asiatic Researches. Lord Teignmouth

demand is granted. Whether from reverence for their order, or from the smallness of the requisitions made, it is observed, that such solicitations are almost universally successful.

3. Another mode of defeating the ends of justice, equally singular and cruel, is the erection of what is named a *Koor*. This appellation is given to a circular pile of wood, prepared for conflagration. Upon this pile is placed, sometimes a cow, sometimes an aged woman, who is intended to be consumed.

The object of this practice is to intimidate the officers of government from making their demands of rent; and the sacrifice is supposed to involve in great sin, the person whose conduct forces the constructor of a *Koor* to have recourse to this expedient. In 1780, three Brahmins in Benares erected a *Koor*, to compel the revenue officers to make a diminution of their assessment. They had placed on the pile, a woman blind from age, who must have been destroyed but for the timely interference of authority.

These cruel practices have generally been committed by the Brahmins themselves, who should not only be best acquainted with the tenets of Hindoo faith, but also most strongly influenced by its practical precepts. The last mentioned fact seems peculiarly repugnant to that mildness of disposition by which the author of the *Historical Disquisition* concerning ancient India affirms the inhabitants of it to have been

distinguished in every age. As a general position, liable to particular exceptions, we are not authorised to contravert it; but on all hands it must be admitted, that individuals in India are irritated, by petty offences, to the perpetration of certain acts which no provocation can justify. Many examples might be produced of Brahmins killing their children, their parents, and even themselves, prompted by fanaticism, by pride, by vindictive malice, and violence of temper. If such be the conduct of the spiritual guides of the Hindoos, the common people may easily be conceived liable to less restraint, and therefore capable of committing still more extravagant enormities.



SECTION XI.

CERTAIN CRUEL AND IMMORAL CUSTOMS TOLERATED BY THE HINDOO RELIGION.

THAT the practice of infanticide should ever become so general as to be ranked among the customs and usages of any race of men, requires the most unexceptionable testimony to gain belief*; yet this melancholy fact, as far as regards female infants, is fully established, by immemorial usage, among the

* The practice is known, however, to exist in several parts of China, and to prevail to a melancholy extent in Otaheite: in the place last named, this cruel custom, united with the unnatural practices of the Arreoyoys (nobles), has rapidly diminished the population of that island, since it was first discovered by Europeans.

Rajekoomers, who inhabit the district of Juanpore, adjoining the territories of Oude, and within the British provinces.

Among this tribe of the Hindoos, it was discovered in 1789, by the Resident of Benares, that a custom had long subsisted, and was then general, of putting to death their female offspring, by causing their mothers to starve them. The Resident had an opportunity of authenticating the existence of this custom by their own confession*; he conversed with many, who all unequivocally admitted the reality of the custom, but all did not acknowledge its atrocity; on the contrary, they alleged as a reason for it, the expence and difficulty of procuring suitable matches for their daughters, should they allow them to arrive at maturity.

“ It naturally suggests itself as a question, regarding this race of people,” says the nobleman who has recorded this fact, “ by what means is it perpetuated under the existence of such a horrid practice? To this question, the reply uniformly made is, that the custom, though general, is not universal, some exceptions being admitted among the more wealthy; but that the tribe is perpetuated chiefly by intermarriages with other Rajepoot families, to which the Rajekoomers are compelled by necessity.

* Asiatic Researches; a paper by Lord Teignmouth.



INDIAN RECREATIONS.

“ A custom so repugnant to the dictates of humanity, and to the feelings of natural affection, the British government has tried to abolish, and with considerable success. The means chiefly resorted to, were the denunciation of a severe penalty against it; and to the weight of civil authority, it added the sanction of that religion which the Rajekoomers themselves professed. Where these motives failed, they prevailed upon them to enter into an engagement, binding themselves to desist in future from the barbarous practice of causing their female children to be put to death. The same practice having been found prevalent, but in a less degree, among the Rajebunses, a small tribe within the province of Benares, a similar method was pursued, to make them sensible of its iniquity; and an obligation was exacted from them, containing similar provisions with that entered into by the Rajekoomers *.”

* The deed presented to these savage tribes for their subscription, stated, that “ Whereas the destruction of female
“ children is held a great crime in the *Brahma Bywant Pooran*,
“ where it is said that killing even a foetus, is as criminal as
“ killing a Brahmin; and whereas the British government,
“ whose subjects we are, has an utter detestation of such murderous practices, We do hereby agree not to commit any
“ longer such detestable acts : and any among us, (which God
“ forbid) who shall be hereafter guilty, or shall not bring up,
“ and get our daughters married to the best of our ability,
“ among those of our cast, shall be expelled from our tribe,
“ and shall neither eat nor keep society with us, besides suffering hereafter, the punishment denounced in the above
“ *Shaster* and *Pooran* : we have therefore entered into this
“ agreement,” &c.

afford even the small sum necessary for firewood. On the death of the poorer sort, therefore, the carcases are thrown naked and indiscriminately into the river, where they float along the stream till they are devoured by the vulture, or become a prey to the alligator.

But waving these particular usages, some of which are, perhaps, abuses which have sprung out of their primitive institutions, it may be contended on good grounds, that the general spirit of the system has itself a tendency, in many instances, to promote ignorance and encourage vice*.

* In the *Historical Fragments of the Mogul Empire*, Mr Orme has presented the public with a laborious and detailed exposition of all those defects of the Hindoo system. The author, in this work, conveys no very favourable impression of the Indian character; but his ideas are the result of personal observation: they are clear, forcible, and correct. Towards the close of his interesting disquisition, he thus sums up the general impression which the subject left upon his mind.

“ Having brought to a conclusion this essay on the government and people of Hindostan, I cannot refrain from making the reflections which so obviously arise from the subject—Christianity vindicates all its glories, all its honours, and all its reverence, when we behold the most horrid impieties avowed amongst the nations on whom its influence does not shine, as actions necessary in the common conduct of life: I mean poisonings, treachery, and assassination, among the sons of ambition, rapine, cruelty and extortion, in the ministers of justice—I leave Divines to vindicate, by more sanctified reflections, the cause of their religion and their God.”

The Hindoo system makes little or no provision for the instruction of the great body of the people : a defect the more remarkable, when we advert to the number and authority of its priesthood, and the great multiplicity and size of its sacred volumes. Their vedahs, poorans, and other books held sacred, contain, it is said, a copious system of sound morality ; and from the specimens already translated, this must be partly admitted ; but the truths contained in these writings are almost totally obscured and rendered useless by a vast mixture of puerile fictions and frivolous regulations. And besides, the canonical books of the Hindoos have always been regarded as a bequest too sacred to be committed to vulgar hands : to the far greater part of the community their perusal is strictly forbidden : closely guarded in the archives of the learned, to the great body of the people they remain, in the most emphatic sense, “ a dead letter.”

In the present condition of the natives of Hindostan, this, however, is a matter of less consequence than at first sight it may appear. Few individuals among the commonalty are taught more than to read

He adds, “ The sons of liberty may here behold the mighty ills to which the slaves of a despotic power must be subject ; the spirit darkened by ignorance and fear ; the body tortured and tormented by punishments inflicted without justice, and without measure : such a contrast to the blessings of liberty, heightens at once the sense of our happiness, and our zeal for the preservation of it.” P. 414.

and to write small memorandums or accounts ; and of the few who have made this attainment, hardly any have made sufficient progress to qualify them to derive information from a book. We have had occasion to notice, in a preceding part of this work, that nothing can surpass the ignorance of the great body of the people, on every subject, whether relating to religion, *morals*, or general literature.

Few of them can explain the genealogy or the attributes even of the most popular of their own deities : they do not seem to comprehend, or to attach any meaning to the ceremonies they daily attend : the nature and obligations of moral duty they must feel in common with the rest of mankind, but they are wholly incapable to explain them to each other, much less to estimate their importance.

The sciences in India, and also the liberal arts, are confined at present, and probably always have been confined to the great and learned alone. That system of moral and theological knowledge, (whatever are its properties), which has for so many ages been possessed by a few in the higher ranks, is placed as compleatly beyond the reach of the common people, as if it did not exist : of consequence, it can be of little service in promoting their interest, or in regulating their actions. Those religious and political discussions which in Europe sometimes produce disturbance, and which always sharpen and invigorate the intellect, are unknown in the East. There an

utter stillness and silence reigns upon every question of this nature, more resembling intellectual death or annihilation itself, than the ordinary exercise of the human understanding.

The consequences resulting from a degree of ignorance so gross and universal, are too obvious to require elucidation*. It not only renders the great mass of the people dupes to the artifices of priestcraft, but subjects them to the impositions of every Charlatan who pretends to skill in any art or science whatever. Those *charms*, incantations, and *exorcisms*, which among them, still constitute a branch of the medical art, clearly shew, that the grossest impositions in other matters, as well as in religion, may be practised and turned to account among an uninformed multitude.

Perhaps the great superiority of the European nations over the Asiatic, in general knowledge, as well as arts and arms, arises in a more considerable degree than is commonly admitted, from the public provision which exists among the former, for the instruction of the great body of the people†. The multitude, who have but few sources of information, derive no small advantage from those stated meetings for receiving religious and moral instruction,

* Many of the oldest servants of Europeans are unable to tell their own age.

where their various duties are illustrated, and the practice of them is regularly enforced. Hence, among Britons, at least, while a sense of duty is cherished, a consciousness of his importance is also felt by the individual, which prompts him to guard his civil rank and privileges with equal jealousy and pride. The Hindoo, either feels no such sentiments, or they actuate him but feebly. On the contrary, a sense of his inferiority seems continually to haunt him: He obeys the command of another, with a promptitude which seems rather the dictate of nature, than the result of reflection. In most of those manufactures that are conducted by European superintendants, this disposition of the natives is daily conspicuous. While executing a process which they and their ancestors have managed for ages, they yet receive the directions of the European agent, as if they were dictated by inspiration; although it may happen, that this agent has had only the experience of a few months to guide him.

The diffidence of the seapoy is particularly remarkable; and it constitutes, perhaps, the greatest blemish in his professional character. On the day of battle, while led on by his European officer, he is distinguished by steadiness and bravery; but should he behold *him* fall, he flies, although in the retreat, there were greater danger than in the battle.

Thus has ignorance, among the great body of the natives of India, deeply shaded their character with

a diffidence and timidity, which has not only rendered them the slaves of their own monarchs, but of foreigners in every age; and has in some measure degraded them to an inferior rank among human beings. From this depressed condition, which has so often excited the contempt of the brave, and which ought always to have moved the compassion of the wise, we shall, perhaps, in vain, endeavour to raise them, so long as their intellects remain so completely chained down by the multiplied fetters of an illiberal superstition.

In the mean time, the morals of the inhabitants of India, are by no means free from the contaminating influence of a system which is productive of such baneful effects upon their understanding. Of the ceremonies of Brahminism, some are shewy; many are absurd; and not a few, both indecent and immoral. Its temples were formerly in some districts richly endowed; they are represented by all travellers as maintaining a number of priests, and what seems peculiar, a number of women consecrated to this service, who are taught to sing and dance at public festivals in honour of the Gods. The voluptuous indolence in which they are destined to spend their lives, renders them totally useless to society; while the indecency of their manners gives room to suspect that they may injure it by their example*.

The temples themselves, which in other countries excite sentiments of reverence and devotion, are in India plenished with images of fecundity and of creative power too gross for description. Similar representations are also displayed by those images which at certain times are drawn through the streets amidst the dancing, noise, and acclamations of the multitude. The *Ruth Jatra*, or riding of the Gods, is a ceremony at once cruel and indecent. The carriages on which their deities are then placed, are of immense height, and supported on sixteen wheels; the whole drawn along by thousands of fanatics, some of whom fall down before these wheels, and being instantly crushed, are, as they believe, put in possession of immortal bliss.

Though, according to the judicious Dr. Robertson, it may be unjust to suppose that these representations convey conceptions to the minds of the Hindoos, equally gross and indelicate with those which they must impress on Europeans; yet there hardly can remain a doubt that they must affect the purity of their morals. It will not be contended that a Roman could return to mix in society with advantage to his delicacy and morals, after celebrating the orgies of Bacchus, or the impure ceremonies of the *Bona Dea*. Neither can it be urged that an Hindoo must enter his family with any refined notion of chastity or self-denial, after beholding the lascivious gestures of the dancing women, and the

indecent images of those deities which he has been worshipping.

The Mussulmans, it is allowed, are addicted to every species of indulgence and debauchery; and if the Hindoos are not equally so, it is chiefly to be ascribed to their early marriages, and to the number of their wives, which affords them every opportunity of gratifying or of extinguishing their passions as soon as they arise. Their indulgence in certain gratifications to excess, has generally been assigned as the cause of that premature old age, and early decay, so conspicuous in both sexes, but more especially among the females. In India a woman at twenty-five very frequently exhibits grey hairs, and that shrivelled appearance of age, which in Europe seldom overtakes the sex till they have reached the course of nearly half a century.

But besides these instances, in which the Hindoo system seems to operate directly against the morals of the people; it has other references which must produce indirectly the same unhappy effect. It has, in common with every false system, a tendency to dissever religion from morals; and to substitute in room of the last a multitude of ceremonies, and a train of bodily exercises. "To break off iniquity by repentance," to correct the whole life and conversation, the weakness of human nature has rendered at all times a difficult task: Hence mankind are in general eager to adopt any easier mode that may

be held out to them of appeasing the deity for the violation of his laws.

In such devices the Hindoos have been more laborious than any other people. The vast period of time that has elapsed since the first origin of their institutions, has conferred upon the system a degree of complexness and maturity, possessed by no other ritual. Its ceremonies and dogmas are, beyond comparison, more numerous than those either of the Grecian or Roman paganism. The rites of the Hindoo are, indeed, so multitudinous, that they must challenge his attention in almost every action and moment of his life : The forfeitures incurred by their neglect, must often alarm him, whether he remain active or idle, awake or asleep. If, in any thing, he is allowed a discretionary power, it would seem to be in discharging the moral duties of his station : in every subordinate function, whether he eat or drink, he must do all to the satisfaction of his Brahmin, who exercises over him the full rigour of an unrelenting discipline.

It would be, perhaps, rash, after all, to affirm that the Hindoos are immoral and depraved, in a degree proportioned to the melancholy extent of their superstitious system, though their minds are strongly withdrawn by it, from feeling the due weight of moral obligations. Those who are concerned in the police, know well the frequency of fraud, robbery, and murder, as well as the great number of delinquents which

have always rendered the prisons more crowded than any other habitations in India. It has not been from them, nor indeed from any class of men intimately acquainted with their manners, that the Hindoo character has received so many encomiums for its innocence and simplicity.

The direct obstacles to improvement to be found in the Hindoo scriptures themselves, are so numerous and great, that the vague morality contained in them, were it even taught to the people, (which it is not,) would by no means compensate for the injury thus sustained. These writings contain several ordinances peculiarly hostile to the improvement of agriculture, and the increase of population, since they preclude the inhabitants from the use of many important articles of food. Their precepts often trench deeply upon industry itself, which among the body of the people, is the great basis of morality, and primary fund of all subsistence. The number of holidays, which they enjoin to be wholly devoted to the performance of expensive rites and shews, must certainly tend to dissipate the minds of an indolent race of men, and withdraw them from that necessary labour, from which, in every country, the people derive their support. These shews not only engross the tradesman's time, which is his revenue, but they must also waste the sustenance he may have provided, by the necessity which he lies under to contribute to their expence.

The number of holidays distinguished in the Hindoo calendar, is reckoned, by a personal witness, to amount to nearly an hundred in each year; and though some of these are not of much practical note, others claim their attention for several days together*. Such an heavy deduction from their season of labour, must prove a severe tax on the industry and sustenance of any people, but more especially on that of the Hindoo, who can seldom boast of sufficient foresight, to provide a supply against a few days, either of sickness or want of employment.

Of all the practical inconveniencies of this system which have yet been noticed, this is by far the most universally and severely felt by the people. Accordingly, every thing that has been advanced in Europe regarding the want of industry observable in Roman Catholic states, may be urged with double force against the inhabitants of India; for the most indolent nation that has yet been found in this quarter of the globe, far excels the listless votaries of Brahminism in every exertion either of mind or of body.

From the combined operation of all these causes, it has been the uniform persuasion of the wisest among the Portuguese and Dutch nations, and likewise of our own, that the Hindoos can never be fully civilised till their religious system is changed:

* Vide Vol. I.

That, if they cannot be absolutely converted from their faith, the rigour of their superstition must be considerably relaxed before any conspicuous improvement can be effected, even in their political or civil condition. This relaxation of the ties of bigotry and superstition has, in every country, been effected chiefly by the increase of knowledge. Great Britain, taught by the experience of the past, ought, therefore, to make strenuous and direct efforts to instruct the native population within her dominions; to enlarge their minds, and to refine their morals. Efforts of this kind, directed to the instruction of youth, have hitherto been few; and these so feebly conducted as to be undeserving of notice, did they not experimentally prove the practicability of this important measure.

From all that has yet been recorded on this subject, and from every thing that has been established by fair experiment, this inference is unavoidable, that in India no school has been altogether unprofitably taught, and that no missionary doctrines have ever been attended with any discernible advantage. "Their parrow (talk) is very good," said the chiefs of Otaheite, meaning the discourses of the missionaries; "they give us plenty of the word of God, but few axes." In this island, where the missionary labours have been so completely baffled, it would seem that the natives themselves are aware of the insufficiency of the means employed for their im-



provement, and feel a desire for objects suited to their actual wants. Even the indolent and superstitious Hindoos have been found accessible to instruction in points having a direct reference to their comfort, and tending immediately to better their condition. We shall therefore enquire how far the exertions of the missionaries have been directed to this primary object.



SECTION XII.

OF THE CONDUCT OF THE MISSIONARIES—CAUSES OF THEIR WANT OF SUCCESS.

AFTER having noticed the multiplied errors of Indian superstition, and illustrated some of the many evils which result from it ; we are next to advert to the propriety and fitness of the means which have hitherto been adopted to dispel the ignorance of our Indian subjects. For, although indifference has prompted some to conclude, that every change is inexpedient ; and the difficulty of the enterprise has deterred others from attempting it, yet many, for a period of near two hundred years, have pursued the task of evangelising India, with a considerable portion of ardour and zeal.

To us, were we permitted to hazard an opinion on this weighty subject, the European missionaries seem not only to have mistaken the means, but the period of life also, in which men are most easily influenced in their religious and moral sentiments. Youth is the season in which prejudices are unformed, and in which the mind is most accessible to new information. All men, but chiefly the illiterate, adhere, during the maturity of age, to their religious opinions with bigotted attachment. However gross or absurd the tenets of these heathens may appear to us, who have been educated in a different system, yet to themselves they all appear equally sacred and incontrovertible: Such is the powerful influence of time, authority, and example.

The ill success, therefore, which has attended our missionaries, in attempting to arraign the faith of a whole people as absurd, and to decry their ceremonies as sinful, ought not so much to surprise us, as the folly of such an attempt, and the permission given to undertake such an enterprise. The liberality of no country in Europe, is, perhaps, sufficient to permit even an attempt, openly made, to change the national faith. There, in all probability, a sullen contempt or open violence, would soon manifest the detestation of the people against so rash an undertaking.

On the part of the Hindoos, however, no violence or concerted opposition has ever been made to this

measure. Ever since the settlement of Europeans in their country, various denominations of missionaries have been at work to reclaim and convert the natives, both on the part of Government and individuals ; and if no desirable harvest has been reaped from their labours, they have, at least, met with no hostile treatment from the multitude, whose opinions they arraigned.

The Portuguese, among whom, at one period, conversion was held out as the grand object of conquest, engaged at first in this great work with an ardour that seemed worthy of its importance, and with a perseverance that promised more happy fruits. Their worship, from the number of its shewy rites, was in some degree assimilated to that of the natives themselves, and might appear well calculated to captivate the attention of the multitude, though it might not greatly enlarge their understanding. Yet the effects continually produced by all their exertions, have invariably proved inadequate to the hopes entertained by their projectors in Europe.

Saint Francis de Xavier himself, who was long regarded as the great apostle of the gentiles in the East, and who was believed by many to have wrought miracles in this field of pious industry, has left behind him the most scanty proofs of his success. Though the number of his nominal converts was at one time so considerable, as to obtain for him

the honour of canonisation ; yet it cannot be truly affirmed, that he has added much, either to the knowledge, industry, or virtue of the poor Pariahs, who listened with so much devout admiration to his discourses. His residence in India, during a period of ten years previous to 1552, is said to have been signalized by a number of conversions in Goa, Comorin, and Japan ; yet the present state of Christianity in all these parts, affords but little corroboration of this assertion, and far less proof of the preternatural powers that have been ascribed to this celebrated man. In fact, the annals of the Portuguese church in the East, were at this period disgraced by the same mixture of credulity and bigotry as in the present state.

The Dutch, although that nation has long been distinguished, more by an avidity in the pursuits of commerce, than by zeal for the dissemination of religious knowledge, have not, however, left the task untried, of converting the native subjects of their Indian dominions. Chaplains have been appointed by the Government, not only at Batavia, but at Chinsura and Calcapore in Bengal : In the two latter settlements, the surrounding inhabitants being the same as the British subjects in Bengal, the missionary labours there had nearly the same unprofitable issue*.

* Vide Vol. I.

A society of well-disposed persons in Britain, collected a fund, many years ago, and sent missionaries to Bengal; but although their establishment still subsists, no conversions of any moment have ever dignified its labours. This society has for some time past been associated with a Danish mission, formed on a similar plan, and actuated by the same views. By thus combining together their efforts and resources, an elegant church has been built; but few of the natives, even of the lowest class, have ever condescended to come under its roof. This edifice has therefore been used as one of the ordinary places of worship for the European inhabitants of Calcutta. Excepting a few of the Pariah tribe, or *out-casts*, in the neighbourhood of Madrass, who are sometimes seen listening to the discourses of the chaplains, with much greater appearance of wonder than intelligence, the missionaries of the East cannot boast of their having gained to their society, even those unfortunate Hindoos who have been debarred from all communication with the rest of mankind.

These consequences are the unavoidable result of the labours of conversion, at least on the plan that they have been hitherto conducted on in India; and by every person in any degree acquainted with the condition of the natives, they might have been anticipated. It is to be feared, that neither the zeal of our preachers, nor that of their employers, have been guided by requisite knowledge. They have neglected to bestow education on the natives; and they have

and become equally versant in its doctrines as the other scholars of the same age.

But though knowledge has been imparted to this class of our Indian subjects, it is not affirmed that they all have become real Christians or good men. It is sufficient for our present view of the subject that experience has demonstrated the natives of India to be capable, under the ordinary means of instruction, of attaining a competent share of moral and religious knowledge. " Paul may plant, and " Apollos may water," but the increase is the gift of another hand ; that hand, which, to the knowledge of religion, can alone add either its true spirit, or its efficacy and power.

Let us, therefore, in Europe, no longer express our surprise or regret at the want of success in the missionary labourers of India ; so long as these labourers prosecute the task by means that are impracticable. In his present state of ignorance, and under the terror of excommunication, the conversion of an Hindoo by preaching alone, may be regarded as somewhat miraculous. To suppose him able to comprehend the doctrines of our religion, and at liberty to embrace them, are assumptions equally contrary to fact : were the case otherwise, the few converts that have been made in India, for a period of two hundred years, might seem a presumption that the doctrines of our system were either inferior in value, or supported by less evidence than the tenets

of that institution, to which he continues to adhere. On the contrary, the doctrines of our religion are addressed to us as "wise men," who are commanded to "judge what they say." It is, therefore, no objection against them, that there may exist a state of ignorance too gross for their comprehension; or a degree of superstitious fear which their allurements, ill understood, are not able to overcome.

There must, in every mind, be some information, some power of intellect, before a preference can be given to any one system of opinions above another: over total ignorance, truth itself has no power. If these positions are true, it must necessarily follow, that the missionary labours have been taken up at the wrong end. The means of diffusing the light of the gospel through India, are not now the same with those that were enjoyed by its first promulgators in the world; the miraculous powers are wanting: yet the apostles, although in possession of an extraordinary commission, and endowed with preternatural powers, were commanded, nevertheless, to "*teach all nations.*" Can their uninspired and feeble successors have wisely endeavoured to grasp at a more expeditious method, when encompassed with circumstances much less favourable?

When the sway of the Pagan system first yielded to that of Christianity, in the territories of Greece and Rome, a large portion of the people was capable of comprehending its doctrines, and of examining the

evidence by which they are supported. Some general knowledge of both was diffused before its reception ; and the circumstances of the people, in these countries, were, in many respects the reverse of what they are, in India. They were neither attached to their theological system, nor to its practical rites, by any insurmountable prejudice. It was a fabric confessedly erected in a rude age, and the increase of knowledge, in subsequent times, had widely exposed its grossness and imperfection. Horace, Juvenal, Lucian, and some others of their most favourite writers, had lashed the absurdities of the system, and the very characters of its Gods, with equal freedom as those of their fellow citizens : and even before they had ventured thus far, the worship of other deities, and the observance of new rites, was regarded rather as a mark of superior piety, than of any malignity against the national faith.

The most dignified characters in the state, it is true, were selected to preside in the sacerdotal chair, and to perform the public functions of religion ; but they discharged their duty with only outward gravity, while inwardly they felt much indifference, or, perhaps, contempt*. They beheld, therefore, without concern, the advancement of a new system, from which they dreaded no mischief. There was not among them a numerous and hereditary priesthood,

* Gibbon's decline and fall.

who foresaw in its establishment, the downfall or destruction of their whole order.

Almost all these circumstances, in the condition of the Hindoos, are either different, or diametrically opposite : among them, no collision of opinion has awakened the curiosity of the people, or roused the human intellect : no books have ever reached their hands to convey information, nor has even a newspaper been printed in the native language. Of all abstract ideas, the multitude in India is almost entirely destitute. To a people in this state, it is in vain that you propose any system of doctrines for their discussion : there can hardly be any sufficiently simple for their understanding ; and perhaps none too gross for their belief.

Unfortunately for the Hindoos, their Brahmins will not permit them to exercise the small portion of intellect which they are known to possess ; since every departure from the customary rites is held up by them as of all things the most sinful, and not to be expiated but by the severest penalties. Thus the attachment of an Hindoo to his faith and worship, is guarded equally by his ignorance and fear. It is the care of the priesthood, who, among them, are the sole guides of opinion, to keep him constantly under the dominion of both. They watch and labour to preserve ignorance, not to disseminate knowledge, every

inlet to which is guarded as closely as the avenues of death*.

These causes alone, without any violent opposition on the part of the Hindoos, have hitherto prevented any considerable degree of success from ever signalling the labours of our missionaries in India. At different times, as well as the present, the fervor of zeal, or the efforts of humanity, have produced various exertions in favour of the natives; but as all these plans have borne the same aspect, and have embraced similar means, the causes of disappointment have remained strong and permanent; their efforts have proved almost uniformly fruitless. In the province of Madura, and afterwards in the Mysore, some of the lower classes have attended the discourses of missionaries, and yielding a kind of assent to their doctrines, if assent can be given to what is not understood, they have been enrolled in their catalogue of believers, although more than a nominal Christianity has never yet been found in these parts: a church and teachers have been established in Delhi for near two hundred years†, and still subsists there; it has, however, received no increase of converts to

* Their conduct seems to resemble that of those persons who are blamed for "detaining the truth in unrighteousness."

† First planted by Portuguese Jesuits, according to Thevenot. The labours of this Order were spread through almost every country in the Eastern world. Vide *Lettres edifiantes et curieuses*. They boast of having performed miracles, and

afford any hope of final success. The missionaries of the Propaganda have lately been depressed, and either seem weary of so fruitless a task, or carry it on with a feebleness which gives little countenance to the hopes of their employers.

to have made numerous converts : but these narratives were not believed, even by the natives, and have thrown discredit on the whole of their exertions.

SECTION XIII.

THE PROPRIETY OF ESTABLISHING SCHOOLS FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF YOUTH IN INDIA.

THESE various attempts of European missionaries, and many more might have been enumerated, ought at least to have the effect of clearly demonstrating the unfitness and impropriety of the means employed: they ought to convince the reflecting part of mankind, that, before the influence of true religion can be felt by the natives of India, we must reverse the order of proceeding, and begin the work hereafter, not by haranguing the multitude, but by teaching the youth—by increasing their knowledge, and improving their understanding. The zeal of the present age seems to have revived; its contributions are large; and its effects will, perhaps, soon be renovated and

strengthened in the East. May we not hope to find fewer missionaries, and a greater number of tradesmen, mechanics, and schoolmasters, hereafter established in India? or are we for ever to pursue that plan of speculative doctrine, without discipline, which has for two hundred years proved wholly fruitless and ineffectual, and to abandon, or overlook, the humbler and more laborious efforts of teachers, which, hardly in one instance, have been disappointed?

This proposition ought no longer to be deemed either visionary, or of doubtful advantage: the establishment of district and parochial schools, has proved, in Europe, the most successful method of communicating information, and, what is still more valuable, moral principles to the great body of the people. If this establishment has proved the most effectual remedy against *ignorance*, *vice*, and *mendicity*, in every country where it has been carefully supported; does it not follow, with the irresistible force of an experimental truth, that we must resort to the same measure in India, before we can expect, I do not say their conversion, but any permanent amelioration of their condition, or valuable accession to their moral and religious knowledge?

In that country, the prejudices of the people are necessarily strong; supported as they are by universal consent, and the example of the whole community, they must always continue too powerful to yield

to the transient impressions made on their minds by the loose discourses of ignorant missionaries.

Were seminaries, of the kind now recommended, generally established in the country, the art of reading their language, of writing, and of keeping accounts, might be communicated to every class of the people. The scriptures, and cheap books on morality and religion, might then be put into their hands with some prospect of their profiting by the perusal. Then, and perhaps not till then, can we hope to avail ourselves fully of the generous efforts that are now making by that great and respectable society lately instituted by a late Governor-General of India*.

Possessing such important guides of conduct, of such means of perusing them, it may be hoped, that the natives of India would become at once more useful in promoting their own best interests, and those of the community, as intelligent husbandmen, merchants, and manufacturers. With better principles of action laid before them, they would be more able to regulate their own conduct, and to appreciate the truth and value of the Brahminical doctrines, not by the encomiums of their interested teachers, but by their influence on the moral character, and their insufficiency for the direction of human life.

Happily for the execution of this measure, the natives have no aversion to commit their children to the

* Lord Teignmouth, President of the Bible Society.

tuition of Europeans; they are rather ambitious that their offspring should acquire the accomplishment of reading and writing the English, though a foreign language, as the means of enabling them to prosecute successfully some lucrative branch of trade, and of introducing them as clerks and agents into the employment of the British. An Hindoo of rank will not, it is confessed, allow his children either to eat or sleep in the same apartment with Europeans, but he is known to permit them freely to remain at a day-school, which for the above named branches of education is sufficient.

It is asserted by persons practically acquainted with this subject, that the desire of the people after education is so strong, that several have at present, with much expence, placed their children under the tuition of Europeans: and that there are many more taught by such of the natives themselves as understand the English language. Where neither of these means of instruction can be afforded, there have been many instances of spelling books, and copies for learning to write, being purchased by such as have supposed that they might acquire these branches of knowledge by their own private application*.

* From the first Volume of this work, it appears that schools for the instruction of the natives, are already pretty general in many parts of India: it is probable too, that such institutions are of very old standing in that country. Their method of teaching to read, write, and spell, by a single pro-

There are at present residing in Calcutta two gentlemen, who have not only witnessed these several facts, but who have themselves been engaged in the tuition of some natives of distinction, and who have been able to communicate to them much useful instruction. The parsimonious habits of an Hindoo, almost of every rank, rendering him averse to part with money on any occasion, unless to his Brahmin, the institution of schools here proposed, ought to be attended with an established salary, as a provision for the teachers : this provision might be occasionally increased, by the contribution of such wealthy natives as are able to afford a liberal assistance to the instruction of their children. In other cases the benefit of knowledge would be more acceptable to the natives by being conferred gratuitously.

This interesting experiment might be tried, with much ease, and a very limited expenditure, at *Bombay*, *Madras*, and *Calcutta*, where the whole conduct of it would be under the immediate inspection of the different governments. In the latter city, in particular, the children of half a million of people might soon be taught to read, write, and keep accounts ; a circumstance which would prepare them for the perusal of such books on morality and reli-

cess, is at once expeditious and unexpensive. It is accomplished by forming the letters on sand, spread either upon the ground or on a table ; and one lesson is no sooner finished, than the characters are effaced to make room for another.

gion as the respectable society already noticed, might deem it expedient to put into their hands.

There hitherto, it must be acknowledged, has been found some difficulty in procuring sober and diligent Europeans, who, in India, were willing to confine their prospects of advancement to the irksome, and, in that country, laborious drudgery of teaching. The notion of making a large fortune by pursuing the cotton, silk, or indigo business, however uncertain, has had always sufficient attraction to withdraw men of education from a station of life that has too often been regarded as unimportant, and even degrading.

In the present circumstances of Calcutta, this obstacle can be little felt; or rather does not exist; and in all our other settlements in India must be gradually diminishing. The number of children born to Europeans by native women, is every year increasing; and to provide employment for them, has already become a matter of serious consideration. By the present regulations of the East India Company, this class of young men is excluded from the service of government, in every capacity, whether civil or military. Their education, as well as their limited ambition, seems to point them out as the most eligible persons for the instruction of the native race of youth. Their number is already so considerable as to produce, perhaps, a sufficient supply for every appointment of this nature, which either the piety

or benevolence of the age is likely to suggest. Their continual increase, must soon render them capable of affording an adequate supply of teachers for almost the whole of the British subjects in India, although established on the extensive scale above proposed. That economy of labour which has in some seminaries of Europe been so properly introduced, by the employment of the more advanced scholars in teaching the younger, necessity will point out as an expedient still more indispensable in Asia. By means of it no less than thirteen hundred scholars have been successfully taught by a single superintending master*.

The contemplation of a measure of this kind is the more pleasing, because the adoption of it will immediately place, in an useful profession, a numerous class of unfortunate youth, who, for no fault of their own, have been abandoned by their progenitors on one side, and on account of their Christian education, have been excluded from the society of the other.

Had a sum been devoted to this measure nearly equal to what has been expended for two hundred years in haranguing the ignorant multitudes by missionaries, hardly more intelligent than themselves, it is not too rash to assert that the *knowledge* of Christianity would have, perhaps, been already commen-

* Bell's Tract on the School at Madras.

surate with the limits of our Indian Empire : Or should this great work have as yet been only in a train of accomplishment, the contributors to the measure must have long since had the satisfaction of feeling, that the exercise of their benevolence was, in this important instance, fully approved by their reason.

Theirs would have been the singular comfort of beholding the youth of the largest, and most populous territory ever subjected to European dominion, at once placed within the reach of a rational and useful education : They would have seen superstition becoming gradually weaker and at last destroyed, by being seasonably attacked before its seeds had germinated in the minds of the rising generation. Their understanding, being strengthened by more rational principles, would have at last revolted against that system of "bodily exercise" which infallible wisdom has pronounced equally unprofitable either to "life or godliness."

The existence of knowledge and of superstition at one time in the same society is scarcely possible : They are incompatible, and must subsist and flourish by each others mutual destruction : while the former advances, the latter must recede, and whenever the light of the gospel is seen to arise, the darkness of paganism must soon disappear.

Having now finished such observations as were deemed necessary on the first part of our subject, the civilisation of British India ; and having confined our remarks chiefly to its references to these cardinal points in the comfort of our subjects ; namely, their peace and security ; secondly, their subsistence ; and lastly, their religious and moral instruction ; it is possible many useful hints and judicious regulations may have been omitted. It was supposed the importance of the topics insisted on, and of the measures of reform proposed, might easily compensate for the smallness of their number : It was believed that plainness, and practicability in the means of its execution, ought to characterise every scheme for the instruction and improvement of a population so immense as that of Hindostan, and so far removed from the controul of its projectors. If little new or ingenious is to be discovered in the few measures of reform here submitted to the learned body which is to decide on their merits ; it is because less danger might be incurred by adopting plans that were already known, than by hazarding new schemes on grounds merely theoretical. If experience has proved a good education bestowed on youth, to be the only expedient that has hitherto gained a single rational and sincere convert to our faith ; this kind of instruction has of necessity formed a principal point of discussion in the foregoing pages.

• Were this object fully attained, many other subsidiary arrangements would readily suggest themselves,

or rather would be forced into practice by the very operation of this great preliminary measure. The assistance of the press, that powerful instrument in the diffusion of knowledge, is always resorted to in every part of the British Empire where the inhabitants have been taught to read and write. In India all articles of public business relating to the revenue or police are already printed in the appropriated characters of the Persian, Hindostanee, and Bengalee dialects: An effort which has not merely surprised the natives by its ingenuity, but has at the same time put them in possession of printing, to them a new and most important art.

The examples of Constantinople and Marhannah in Syria, afford, however, sufficient proof that the influence of the press in disseminating knowledge, and guiding opinion, is not very considerable, till the great body of the people has received some elementary education. It is for this reason, that the press has not been insisted on as a primary measure of instruction for Hindostan.

In this short dissertation, little notice is taken of two mighty evils that have long been ascribed to the influence of Europeans in the East: the reason is, that the author, after long ocular observation, denies their reality, and firmly believes them to be the offspring of vulgar prejudice and misconception. The one is, the rapacity and oppression of Europeans during their residence in the country; and the second

is, the supposed loss occasioned by transferring their large property to Europe, on their departure from the East.

Of the first of these evils the natives themselves have not the smallest conception or belief: On the contrary, there are a thousand examples of their relying on the truth, justice, and generosity of the Europeans, in preference to their own countrymen. They have never complained of an evil of which they alone are sufferers; this of itself is strong presumption against its reality. It is, besides, inconsistent with the upright administration of justice, which, in India, has been as unimpeachable as in England.

On the subject of the drain of wealth, by the remittance of fortunes from India, there seems to be a strange misconception of facts, as well as absurdity of reasoning. The man who purchases goods, by himself or his agent, to transfer in that shape his property to Europe, in fact becomes a customer to the native manufacturer to a much greater extent than before. His whole accumulated gains go at a period to the growers, manufacturers, and merchants of the country: and it is not easy to conceive how an increase of business and full payment can injure the parties in this transaction, or how the payment of manufactured produce in India can ever drain that country. The fact certainly is, that every individual, thus remitting his accumulated savings, becomes more useful to the manufactures of the

country, than he was during the whole period of his residence there. In this last case, he only supported a few idle servants and domestics ; and in the first, his whole gains are applied at once to the payment of industrious labourers and artisans.

From a similar consideration, we have omitted the notice of some very judicious arrangements of ecclesiastical policy, which were, nearly a century ago, proposed to the Archbishop of Canterbury, by Doctors Prideaux and Marshall. Their measures for the instruction of British India do no small credit to the accuracy of their information, as well as to the soundness of their judgment. But the expedients which these gentlemen have suggested, almost necessarily present themselves, after the general education of the people has paved the way for their adoption. Let a sufficient share of elementary learning, industrious habits, and moral principles be conferred on our subjects in the East, and an adequate number of ecclesiastical guides will not long be wanting.



SECTION XIV.

THE MEANS OF DIFFUSING MORAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION THROUGHOUT OTHER PARTS OF THE EASTERN WORLD.

ALTHOUGH the British nation may appear less immediately concerned in the promotion of this measure, than in disseminating knowledge among its own subjects; yet it cannot be denied that the undertaking is a duty enjoined equally by Christianity and natural religion. Whoever believes in the former, must admit that it authorises this inference, that mankind are in want of preternatural assistance both for the knowledge and the practice of duty. That principle of universal good will, and native benevolence which it uniformly recommends, implies the commo-

nication to our fellow creatures of every benefit in our power to bestow: That commandment too, so remarkable for its clearness and universality, which enforces the duty of doing to others whatever we would wish to be done by them, admits of no dereliction of any relative duty on the part of those who believe in its divine authority.

The advantages which have arisen from the Christian institute and doctrine, wherever received, impose a new obligation to disseminate the knowledge of this system as widely as possible, independent of any specific precept to this effect. Paganism in all ages has been remarkably defective in provisions for the instruction, the comfort, and the rights of the great body of the people. It possessed no adequate contrivance for speedily communicating to the multitude even the ordinary occurrences of the times.—The *acta diurna* which were daily written at Rome, could not, perhaps, convey through that great Empire, one half of the information which is circulated through some of the smaller states of modern Europe. Throughout the whole precincts of Paganism in the wide regions of the East, there is at present, and has always been the same paucity of the means of instruction, and a remarkable sterility of knowledge.

By the sanctions of this dark and insociable system, no less than one half of the human species is doomed to a state of servility and degradation: The

seclusion of the female sex, not only precludes information from infancy and youth, but at once bereaves society of its fairest ornaments, and poisons the sources of its sweetest comforts. No subsidiary arrangements are provided by Paganism for the numerous wants and weaknesses of humanity : She affords no charitable asylum for the poor, the destitute, the sick and infirm.

Christianity, which has, in Europe, by maxims of mercy, so much softened the horrors of war, is contrasted in the East, by a system which yields no sympathy nor even safety to the vanquished ; and which holds out nothing to the wretched captive, but instant vengeance, or perpetual slavery. The duty of “ loving our enemies,” under her auspices, so far from being supported by general opinion, is hardly acknowledged in any part of the pagan world ; and by far the greatest portion of it denies this duty all admission into the number of human virtues. Instances of the stern and unrelenting character of Oriental Paganism, and examples of its disregard of the best interests of humanity, might be produced sufficient to fill a volume, and distress the reader : Enough, perhaps, has already been stated in former parts of this Essay, to establish a desire to lessen its power, and narrow the sphere of its influence. There are two leading circumstances, however, which merit particular notice ; namely, the maxims of public law which it has established for the intercourse of different nations ; and the rank and privileges which it has

assigned to the different individuals living in the same community.

Neither in the ancient world, nor in modern Paganism, was there ever entertained any idea of justice, except among the members of the same state. The prosperity of a nation, instead of the comfort and wealth of the surrounding states, was supposed to imply, either the depression and weakness, or the utter ruin of all around it. Hence war was uniformly a system of absolute conquest or of utter extermination: and the best patriot in a country, was he who most cordially hated all the neighbouring kingdoms; and he, who, when victorious, most cruelly trampled upon their rights. Thus the miseries of the vanquished had no limits, either in extent or duration. On the contrary, among Christian states, though war is not abolished, the real sufferings of humanity are confined chiefly to the field of contest. Thousands, (as at the present hour) are led thither, but, at the same time, there are many millions who are living in quietness, and who only "read of battles."

Farther, Paganism was defective in forming the internal structure of society itself: She divided it into two classes, recognising only the bondman and the free: The former possessed every thing; the latter, nothing. By the unwilling labour of this last class, the whole society was supported; and although it contained perhaps nine-tenths of the whole society,

as well as that very portion by which all subsistence was provided, its comforts were guarded by no law. These, as well as its sufferings, were left to be determined by the caprice of the master. Christianity, which first announced the dignity of a rational and immortal being, gradually paved the way for the establishment of a system of more equal rights. Its boldest enemies have confessed, that its influence has been tending gradually to abolish this iniquitous state of society, and over one half of the globe it has already literally broken the "chains of the captive," and set the prisoner free." This confession is rendered unavoidable, by comparing the actual state of those nations which profess Christianity, with the condition of those where it is unknown.

In those regions in which "the gospel has been preached to the poor," men of the lowest class have been seen passing through all the gradations of society, to stations of comfort, respectability, rank, power, and distinction. By rewarding, instead of compelling, the labours of the poor, a new order of society has arisen; an arrangement has been formed, which has abolished the monopoly of every comfort and distinction by a single class; and which holds out all the rational comforts of man to every individual of our race. This system has gradually altered the very form and structure of society itself; it has operated through all its gradations, from the captive in the dungeon, to the monarch on the throne; and must, therefore, unquestionably be regarded as

the most happy change ever wrought in favour of humanity. The proof of its existence and reality, happily, does not rest upon our knowledge of the state of the ancient world; but is undeniably evinced by the actual condition of the heathen and Christian nations, as, at the present moment, exposed to every impartial beholder. The very imperfections, however, of heathenism, seem to set limits to its extent and duration.

Independent of the intimations of scripture, which announce the decline and ultimate downfall of the Pagan system, there are circumstances in the very progress of human society, which seem to lead to the same conclusion. Almost the whole continent of America has, within a few centuries, been added to the Christian commonwealth: and the blessings of knowledge and civilisation are not now, as they were in the days of antiquity, confined to a single nation, to one community, or to a small portion of that community. If we are to trust to the lessons either of history or of experience, they coincide with the intimations of scripture, and demonstrate that there is a tendency in knowledge to spread itself, and in human associations to improve. Notwithstanding all that has been said, and so often repeated, concerning the high attainments of antiquity, the world contains at present, perhaps, a greater share of knowledge than it ever possessed at any former period. One thing seems certain, this knowledge is, by the invention of the press, more widely diffused, and far

more generally useful than in any former æra which authentic history has recorded. More than one half of the globe, before the discoveries of modern navigators, was unknown; and the intercourse established between its different regions is probably more than ten times greater than the limited commerce of antiquity could maintain.

A more enlarged intercourse between the different nations of the world, and a greater facility of diffusing knowledge by the invention of printing, are the two leading circumstances that distinguish modern times, and that seem to confer upon them a degree of splendor, at least equal to that of the brightest æras of antiquity.

This increased international correspondence has a direct tendency, in various ways, to disseminate knowledge, and to improve the arts of life; a tendency which is strengthened by the prevailing maxims of modern policy. It is now universally allowed to be a duty on the part of every government to favour the advancement of science, and to promote industry among its subjects; and this duty is deemed hardly less urgent, or indispensable, than that paramount obligation of bestowing protection.

In such circumstances, it is difficult to account for that air of ridicule and contempt which it has been attempted lately to cast upon almost every recent effort that has been made to communicate knowledge

to those Asiatic nations with whom we are connected by alliance, or by trade; and to treat with contempt the humane labours of those who have endeavoured to ameliorate the condition of the subjects of British India, whether by communicating to them, civil, moral, or religious instruction.

Ignorance among the native inhabitants seems at present to be regarded, by many Europeans, at least in India, as the grand pledge of our power, and the only potent charm by which we are to preserve, in their minds, that tame and unqualified submission, even to illegitimate commands, in the private intercourse of life. Hence all attempts to dispel it are held up as either dangerous, absurd, or impracticable; however strongly such attempts may be recommended by the present aspect of our affairs in the East; or however powerfully they may be urged by the dictates of humanity itself.

The vast acquisitions lately made in Asia, by our various successes against the Mahratta confederacy, by our recent victories, and by the expulsion of the French out of Syria and Egypt, have conferred upon Great Britain an extent of territory and influence in the East, which hath never been possessed by any nation, ancient or modern.

The number of additional subjects acquired in our eastern empire, has been estimated, by computations apparently moderate, to amount to no less than

fifty millions of souls. The condition of this vast population, though unquestionably much benefitted, as we have seen, by European intercourse, in the essential points of subsistence, security, and good order, remains still so depressed by an accumulation of ignorance, want, and vice, as admits, not only very great improvements, but which challenges sympathy and commiseration.

Even the other Asiatic nations claim our regard, since among them our intercourse is frequent, though our political connection be less intimate. Among the whole race of Orientals, without almost a single exception, the great bulk of the inhabitants are clothed in a manner so partial, scanty, and unclean, as must prove inadequate to the calls of humanity, even in the most favourable climates. Their food is sparing and insufficient, even when estimated by the rules of the most abstemious system of manners. They are, however, depressed by another species of suffering, the more to be regretted, because more capable of alleviation from our beneficence; their minds, through every class of the people, are detained in darkness by the stern ritual of a superstition, which seems to preclude almost every rational comfort, and to debar all intellectual improvement.

In such circumstances, it might have been imagined, that any attempt, whether of government or of individuals, to improve the condition of our Indian subjects, or of these Asiatic states, would have been

regarded as neither irrational, nor unbecoming the British character. But it seems, the mean education possessed by some of the missionaries ; the fanaticism of a few individuals among them ; and their too frequent failure of success, have proved sufficient, with many of their countrymen, to stamp the whole of their proceedings with such an aspect of absurdity as has induced them to consider every attempt to convey instruction to these degraded races of men, as the offspring either of a weak or of a disordered mind. These sentiments are most frequently entertained by such Europeans as, from an early change of situation, and from having presented to them different religious systems, have been induced, not merely to disregard them, but to brand them as the impositions of craft, practised upon ignorance ; and the number of this class in our foreign settlements, is unhappily far from being inconsiderable.

Such conclusions, however, if not absolutely groundless, are too general and sweeping to derive support even from the wrong principles from which they are inferred. That our missionaries in the East have hitherto been very unsuccessful, will not, perhaps, be denied ; but it is equally certain, that they have received no steady encouragement nor adequate support. That they have frequently employed unsuitable means for the attainment of the object they had in view, is but too certain ; but this fact is far from demonstrating the impracticability of the object itself ; much less can it disprove the importance of the cause

which they were engaged to promote ; nor can it shew the impossibility of its final establishment by abler advocates, and more judicious measures.

Suddenly to change either the civil institutions, or the religious system of a great community, it may be confessed, is a scheme which may neither prove practicable nor wise ; yet the most judicious part of society, both in India and Europe, have conceived the object in view to be widely different from this, and have been ever persuaded, that to promote the knowledge and virtue of our Asiatic subjects, by instructing their youth, is a task which by no means implies the same difficulty or danger. They are convinced, by many examples, of European skill having already much instructed the natives of the East in several arts ; of its having taught them many new branches of industry, and that the silent operation of the same intercourse will in time infallibly improve the Asiatic character, both in energy and knowledge. The most distinguishing advantage enjoyed by the European subjects of Great Britain, seems to arise from that system of useful education which is there conferred upon all ranks, and from the liberal spirit of her government, which extends its care and protection equally to all the members of the community. As the influence of this government in Asia is at present manifestly more extensive than at any former period, it is conceived by many, that the present posture of its affairs is very favourable for making new efforts to transfer some portion of these peculiar blessings

to our Indian subjects, and to the Oriental kingdoms.

Instead, therefore, of ridiculing the labours of such persons as have already engaged in this laudable enterprise of instructing ignorant nations, if men of local knowledge had contributed, by their advice and assistance, a very different result might have, perhaps, already rewarded their toils. Even the missionaries, whom it has become so fashionable to deride, seem to have erred rather in the means they have adopted, than in estimating the value of the object of their pursuit. Those individuals of their order who have penetrated into the Eastern hemisphere, prompted solely by a desire of removing ignorance, and of alleviating the many evils occasioned by it, among such vast numbers of their fellow-creatures, far from meriting the obloquy of their cotemporaries, seem to have been actuated by feelings that are honourable to themselves, and to human nature. In this light, the conduct of some of their number has been viewed by several of the most enlightened travellers of the present age,—men whose testimony is above the suspicion of enthusiasm, or of any irrational bias to particular theological tenets.

Mr Barrow*, the intelligent author of *Travels in Southern Africa*, mentions, in terms of high approba-

* It has been thought necessary to offer a few instances of success in the missionary labours, with detailed exactness, be-



still more perilous association of barbarous men : by all of them, these sacrifices were made without any prospect of temporal reward : in fact, a very scanty subsistence was all that the most laborious of these men have ever reaped from their unremitting efforts, and for encountering situations of uncommon danger.

It affords some consolation to reflect, that these meritorious labours have not been altogether without success *. In China, Japan, Siam, and Ava, the discourses of the missionaries, and particularly their mathematical instructions, have made, at different periods, a considerable impression on many of the higher ranks, and even among the princes of these kingdoms. In Cochin-China, a Roman missionary, who had been appointed titular bishop of that country, so far ingratiated himself with the king, that after his death and interment, he was raised from the grave, that new funeral honours might be conferred upon him, expressive of the regard of that people †.

* There can be no question, however, that much greater effects would have been produced, had these missionaries confined themselves more particularly to the education of children, and to the communication of the more useful mechanic arts, when they addressed such as were advanced in life. It is manifest, from their own accounts, that hunger and nakedness were the great wants which were first to be removed from these savages, before any relish could be created for intellectual food.

† Barrow's Travels in Southern Africa.



SECTION. XV.

OF THE AFRICAN MISSIONARIES AND THEIR CONVERTS.

IN general, it would seem that the instructions of the missionaries have had the greatest influence, wherever the people were not already preoccupied with a matured system of their own. On the banks of *Zonder-End* river, near Bavian's Kloof, in Southern Africa, three Moravian missionaries have gradually attracted to their society a number of the wandering and destitute Hottentots of that district. As their conduct has been successful, in a very difficult and almost hopeless case, it forms a rule for the guidance of future missionaries, among the most savage of the Oriental tribes: they began by supplying their corporeal, before their intellectual wants.

By gradually accustoming them to cleanliness and industry, they have succeeded in changing the natural habits of the Hottentots so completely, that they have now not only a relish for dress, but are enabled to subsist and clothe themselves by the produce of their own labour. They are already acquainted with many of the duties, and aspire to the comforts of rational beings: an effect that probably never could have been produced by holding to them vague and temporary harangues on speculative tenets, before their minds were rendered capable of comprehending them, by a previous education.

The comforts enjoyed by this little society, have, on various occasions, drawn to it such accessions from the destitute savages of that neighbourhood, as have greatly increased its original number. During the short period of the British government in that part of Africa, it had amounted to above six hundred souls; new proselytes were, however, so frequently added, that the missionaries had found it expedient to send to Europe for a farther supply of instructors.

At the period when Mr Barrow passed through this district, his attention was drawn to this society while assembled in the open field on Sunday, for the purpose of performing divine service. A scene so novel in this part of Africa, and so different from what he had been accustomed to observe among this unhappy class of beings, at once gratified his feelings, and excited a lively curiosity regarding the nature of

an establishment which could produce such beneficial effects.

The three missionaries from whom he learnt the particulars of this society, belong to a sect of Moravians termed Hernhuters, from the name of a village in Saxony, which had afforded them an asylum when driven from Moravia. "They were plain and "decent in their dress," adds this traveller, "of modest manners, and intelligent in conversation." Although zealous in the cause of their mission, they were free from bigotry and enthusiasm*.

Around the different dwellings of these missionaries, and those of their flock also, every thing participated of that neatness and simplicity which forms the strongest feature in their character: the church which they had built was a plain and neat edifice: their mill for grinding corn was superior to any in the whole colony: their gardens were also kept in good order, and produced abundance of vegetables for the supply of the table: almost every thing that had been done, was by the labour of their own hands; for, agreeably to the rules of the society of which they were members, each missionary had learned some useful profession. One was skilled in every branch of smith's work, the second was a school-master, and the third a tailor.

* Vide Barrow's Travels in Southern Africa.

The six hundred proselytes who had joined these teachers were cantoned in a valley adjoining the river, and in huts, with a small portion of ground annexed to each, for the purpose of raising sustenance. The various stages of their improvement were still visible, and marked with exactness the length of time they had joined this community: the earliest converts were best clothed, cleanest, and most perfectly accommodated; a circumstance which afforded a pleasing demonstration that their improvement was gradual, and that the amelioration of their state was progressive, arising from a change both in their manners and industry. The condition of the greater part had already become preferable to that of the poor in some parts of England.

The circumstance which seems chiefly to have enabled these missionaries to overcome the indolence and filthy habits that distinguish savage life, is their first endeavouring to accustom the Hottentots to bodily labour and cleanliness, before proposing to their minds any abstract doctrines or theological tenets.

A method the very reverse of this has frustrated the labours of by far the greater part of European missionaries, in almost every part of Asia: in the case now under review, every individual Hottentot who chose to learn a trade, was immediately paid for his labour, as soon as he could earn wages. Some in consequence of this hired themselves for a limited time to the neighbouring peasants; some made mats

and brooms for sale; others reared poultry; and not a few supported themselves and their families by their cattle and sheep. The greater part of the society was by these means enabled to purchase decent cloathing; and to appear at church dressed in printed cottons, instead of the filthy habiliments which had invariably distinguished that tribe in their natural state, and which had conferred upon them a sort of pre-eminence in wretchedness and loathsome barbarity.

These various improvements, thus effected among this tribe of Hottentots, are not to be considered as precarious or transient in their nature; for since they are gradual, and have proceeded upon rational principles, as well as a thorough conviction among the natives themselves of their utility, they have continued, and must continue in a state of gradual advancement. Every individual being at last fully persuaded that cleanliness is greatly conducive to his health and his comfort, he is willing to bestow any little money he can spare in purchasing cloaths, instead of spirits and tobacco, which, in his unreclaimed state, constituted the supreme objects of his desire, although they had occasioned the greater part of those evils and mischiefs which had embittered his condition.

Such have been the effects of the judicious arrangements and instructions of the missionaries at Bavians Kloof. That enthusiasm and fanatical spirit

which has so often characterised the Moravian societies in Europe, having found no place in this society, their discourses are there short, and replete with good sense and useful advice; and so far are they from making any ostentatious display of a large list of new converts to their persuasion, that they have ever been remarkably cautious in conferring either the name or privileges of their new profession upon any of the proselytes at an unseasonable period.

Not more than sixty, of ten times that number of converts, had, at the period alluded to, been admitted members of the Christian Church, by the initiatory rite of baptism. Their conduct, in this respect, has also been as different from that of other missionaries in the East, as the consequences which have been the result of it. In that country, it has been too common, to publish at the different stations, and to transmit to Europe a pompous catalogue of converts to the Christian Church, not without strong suspicion of its magnitude being increased by the artifices of these converts themselves; the same persons presenting themselves at different places under feigned names.

This successful example of the Moravians in Africa, which has thus been given in detail, on the authority of Mr Barrow, is, in every particular, consistent with the personal knowledge of several English gentlemen, who were then upon the spot: But to such as are in any degree acquainted with the cha-

acter of that writer, no additional testimony will be necessary to authenticate any fact recorded in his volumes.

As many important inferences are to be drawn from this conduct of the Moravians of Bavians Kloof, they ought not to rest on a solitary example; the same lesson may be drawn from a thousand instances, as will appear in the sequel.

1. We have to infer from it, first, as a rule for the guidance of future missionaries, that they ought to learn the more useful of the *mechanical trades*. The primary lesson which savage man seems capable of receiving, is to labour with his hands; this nature seems to have ordained as an early provision against cold, hunger, and other urgent wants. Even in the communicating of this instruction, the missionary must meet with many disappointments, and he ought to possess, along with mechanical skill, great patience, and much practical acquaintance with human character.

2. As the individuals of foreign and independent tribes are free, and cannot be compelled to attend the instructions of their teachers, they can only be attached to them by motives of interest: every new lesson ought to be productive of some benefit: it ought either to convey a positive comfort, or remove some want. Hence the missionaries of rude and unreclaimed nations must be men of *active* and un-

wearied benevolence ; they ought not, as heretofore, to be drawn from the haunts of the solitary and re-cluse ; here the mind is too often soured by the acrimony of polemical doctrines, and where the students are generally unqualified by any acquaintance with those mechanical labours which must supply the primary wants of man.

3. The missionaries must beware of magnifying the extent and importance of their own labours. by giving premature admission to their new converts into the rank and privileges of Christianity. By a contrary method, the natives will be too apt to disgrace its doctrines by the grossness of their conceptions, and will, perhaps, still oftener offend the purity of its precepts, by the immorality and extravagance of their conduct.

4. The missionaries ought assiduously to apply to the instruction of the young ; not merely in the elements of learning, as signifying the knowledge of letters, but in communicating habits of domestic industry and useful labour. For these purposes a course of discipline will be found more effectual than oral instruction.

Fifthly, the missionary must “ shew his faith by his works.” His conduct must at all times prove an ornament, not a disgrace to his profession ; for of all the human causes of the speedy diffusion of Christianity among the heathen nations, this has justly been

regarded as the most powerful, namely, the upright and blameless life of its early professors *.

Should these rules of evangelising rude nations be observed, and this mode of instruction, it will be attended with equally good effect among every savage people.

For if the same happy fruits have not been reaped from missionary labours in India and among the other Oriental nations, it must be attributed to the neglect of these necessary means : it cannot, assuredly, be ascribed to any greater indocility in the natives, or to any superior difficulty of communicating instruction to the peaceable Hindoos : notwithstanding the boasted permanency of their system, the great reformer, Nanuk, has converted the whole nation of the Seeks to a different faith.

Our failure so often in these countries, must have arisen from the adoption of a less judicious mode of instruction, from the promulgation of mysterious doctrines, previous to the communication of knowledge sufficient either to appreciate their value or to comprehend their meaning.

The same cause, will, in a great measure, account for the small benefit or advantage which has hitherto

* Vide Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

been reaped from their new faith, by the converts themselves, whether in the knowledge of duty, or in the conduct of life. Neither the remnant of Portuguese Christians in the East, nor the new proselytes to our faith from among the heathens, enjoy any superior reputation for integrity of conduct or respectability of character; nor are they in any respect more trust-worthy in the transaction of ordinary business. The Oriental convert, as we have hitherto seen his education conducted, on his admission into the church, changes his name only; no additional information is conveyed to his understanding, nor any new motives afforded him for the practice of duty.

In those circumstances, finding the ties of his former system, whatever they were, compleatly broken, a laxity of principle is to be apprehended, rather than a more rigid adherence to virtue. From such a conduct, on the part of the missionaries, and from such a plan of instruction, little benefit could be expected: yet the failure of it has occasioned this indolent and unphilosophical conclusion, that no effort of ours can improve the Oriental nations.

The contrary of this position seems, however, to be established by the whole of our past experience: for in Bengal, where the missionaries have been most unsuccessful, many strong proofs are found of the practicability of not only improving the ordinary classes of the natives, but also of instructing savages. In the interior parts of that province, there are several

tribes of mountaineers in a state of complete barbarism ; strangers to almost every comfort of social life and even to the modes of the Hindoo superstition itself.

These savages are often totally naked, and subsist chiefly on noisome reptiles, or roots which they pick up in the woods. They have hardly any intercourse with the agricultural inhabitants of the plain, but that of nocturnal incursions, for the purpose of robbery and depredation. The frequency of such inroads had, at different times, proved a severe annoyance to the cultivators in the adjoining districts, and materially injured the revenues of government. In some large tracts in the neighbourhood of Mongheer and Boglepore, these destructive inroads were still prevalent, when Mr Cleveland, a gentleman of singular benevolence, as well as of a correct judgment, was appointed chief of that part of the country. To him belongs the merit of at once redressing the grievances of those husbandmen, and accomplishing the reformation of those barbarians who disturbed their labours.

The method he pursued consisted of gentle and courteous treatment of the savages ; the punctual payment of the baskets, matts, and other trifling articles which they offered for sale ; small presents of cloth, or whatever might prove most gratifying to their wants. The effect produced by this treatment was perfect confidence in their new chief ; and more fre-

quent intercourse with his people. In the space of a few years, some of the most tractable were embodied into a kind of battalion, and were so much gratified by a small pittance of pay, which was regularly issued to them, that when they were afterwards entrusted with arms, their service was of material advantage in defending the peasants from the depredations of the rest of their tribe. The order and protection thus established, gradually paved the way for the introduction of as much industry as enabled these destitute beings to procure their own subsistence. Every change introduced into their manners was so contrived, as to produce some new comfort to themselves; hence their attachment to Mr Cleveland was strengthened, and a desire was excited of deriving fresh benefits from his liberality. A monument, erected to the memory of this valuable man, who died amidst these labours, attests the high esteem for his character that was entertained by the Governor-General and Council of Bengal. From it we learn, that this worthy person, "without bloodshed, or the terrors of authority, employing only the means of conciliation, confidence, and benevolence, attempted and accomplished the entire subjection of the lawless and savage inhabitants of the jungleterry of Rajah Mahl."

Much room is afforded in every part of India for benevolent exertions of this kind. From Chunar to the Coromandel coast, hordes of savages range their native mountains, through a tract of country extend-

ing many hundred miles—the period during which they have continued in this state, surpasses all tradition. From their slender acquaintance with the Brahminical rites, they have been supposed more ancient than the first establishment of that system.

But the advantages derived from European instruction and intercourse, have not been confined to the remote and savage corners of the East: in Calcutta itself, the capital of British India, we have already noticed, that some natives of distinction have been taught all the elementary branches of European learning, with considerable success; nor has any difficulty occurred in communicating this instruction, farther than that which is at first unavoidably occasioned by the want of a common language between the teachers and their scholars. From the great proficiency lately made by many of the English in the different dialects of the East, this difficulty is becoming daily less; and in teaching the different trades and mechanical arts, it has almost entirely disappeared*. Improved processes in the manufacture of opium, indigo, and saltpetre, have been taught the natives with the same facility and expedition that the knowledge of these arts could have been communicated to the inhabitants of any country in Europe. Ship-building, practical mathematics, and navigation, under European direction, have, as we have already seen, made no contemptible progress among our Asiatic subjects, when

* Because in these, abstract terms are not employed.

we advert to the short period which has elapsed since their attention has been directed to these important branches of knowledge.

If, therefore, in every other department of science and learning, the skill of Europeans has been of such singular benefit to the natives of India, and has produced such substantial improvements, can there remain any doubt, that it is equally practicable to instruct them in the principles of religion and morals?

If the missionaries have been uniformly more unsuccessful than any other class of teachers in the East, does there not thence arise a very strong presumption, either against their own knowledge of the subjects which they have attempted to teach, or against the methods they have adopted to communicate their instructions?

But on the former part of this statement it is the less needful to enlarge, as the present state of learning, among a considerable part of the missionaries, must have frequently evinced to every person conversant with them, not only a want of European science, but, what is more to be regretted in their situation, a remarkable ignorance of local circumstances, and even of the character and manners of the natives.

The earliest missionary establishments in Hindo-
stan, and perhaps in the East, were instituted under
circumstances apparently the most auspicious. They
were, however, soon rendered fruitless and nugatory,
by the ignorance and ineptitude of the teachers, and
by an indiscreet zeal, which alarmed the prejudices
of the Mahomedans.

The reign of Acber, when they first made their
appearance, was distinguished by a degree of tole-
rance altogether uncommon under Mahomedan go-
vernments. That monarch, who is still revered as
the Augustus of Asia, not only afforded equal pro-
tection to the adherents of every sect, but discovered a
strong inclination to become acquainted with the pe-
culiar tenets which distinguished each; and at the
same time shewed a peculiar predilection for the
Christian doctrines.

Prompted by this curiosity, he wrote Albuquerque,
the Portuguese viceroy, for certain Christian priests,
to be sent to his court at Agra. Three members of
the College of Jesuits were dispatched to him on this
occasion: Jeronimo Xavier, the rector at Goa; Ema-
nuel Pigneiro, and Benedict de Gois. Their recep-
tion was favourable, and well suited to the dignity of
the monarch who had given the invitation. A church
was built for these men, it was endowed for their
support, and liberty was granted to teach their doe-
trine; a privilege which was continued during several
successive reigns.

Under the protection of this Emperor, and by his desire, Jeronimo wrote a defence of the doctrines of Christianity against the Mahomedans, which was translated into Persian, and entitled *The Mirror of Truth*. The worship of images, and various other superstitions of the Church of Rome, which, in this work, were held up as the doctrines of Christ, not only drew upon its author the indignation of all devout Musselmans, but afforded them the most dangerous advantages over him, in the replies which they made to it*.

On this occasion Ahmed Eben Zin Alabedin published a reply, entitled *The Brusher of the Mirror*, which the Mahomedans not only regard as a victory over the Jesuit, but as the compleat triumph of their cause: nor have the efforts of the Propaganda in Rome been able to alter their opinion, by the various replies which it has since ordered to be written against this popular work.

That the Christian religion, disfigured as it then was by the gross superstitions and corruptions of the monks of the sixteenth century, did not spread in Asia, is a circumstance that cannot justly be regretted: that the mysterious dogmas, and fanatical effusions of some of the still more ignorant declaimers

* Vide the Life of Mahomed, by Prideaux. Catalogue of Books, &c.

to have succeeded them, have made no general
pression, may be regarded as a fortunate circum-
nce, since the simple doctrines of piety and mo-
ity, as laid down in the scriptures, must have ea-
r admission, as well as happier effect, when they
all hereafter be presented to the Orientals, uncon-
nated by such spurious admixture.



SECTION XVI.

THE SMALL SUCCESS OF VARIOUS MISSIONARY LABOURS OWING TO THE IMMORAL LIVES OF THE CONVERTS AND TEACHERS.

PERHAPS the greatest difficulty in diffusing the Gospel in the East, will, in future, arise, not from the incapacity of the natives, nor even their unwillingness to receive instruction, but from the profligate and unworthy conduct both of the converts themselves, and of their European guides. Mr Terry, chaplain to the English ambassador at the court of Shah Jehan, asserts, that he was prevented, from this circumstance, from ever attempting to convert any of the natives; the lives of former proselytes having so frequently disgraced their profession. His opinion has been thus strongly expressed by M.

Thevenot : " Il m' a toujours paru qu'il -y-a fort peu de profit, par le mauvais exemple que les Chrestiens leur donnent—vivant dans un effroyable dissolution, et s' abandonnans a toutes sortes de debauches *."

The converts made by both the Dutch and English missionaries, have been charged, for more than a century past, with much greater laxity of morals than either the Mahomedans or Hindoos, according to Dr Prideaux †. The influence of government being, in subsequent times, on the side of the teachers, has had sufficient power to draw over to the profession, many of the selfish and unprincipled, who are always ready to join whatever party might best promote their interested views. .

Little moral or religious instruction being in general bestowed upon the converts, previous to their assuming the profession, they have too frequently exposed their new faith to the scandal and reproach of the gentiles ; and have in some measure forced upon them conclusions unfavourable to its truth and usefulness ; for it will, perhaps, be always difficult to persuade the nations of the East of the superior excellence of our religion, so long as the lives of its professors hold up to them an undeniable objection to its influence in point of fact. The inference, which, in such circumstances, they must unavoidably draw,

* Relation de diverses Voyages.

† Life of Mahomed, p. 177.

is of an opposite nature, namely, that the religion which they ought to prefer, is that which produces the most virtuous behaviour, and the most valuable men.

From the over anxious zeal, however, of our missionaries, and their desire to swell the catalogue of believers, the number of such nominal converts is far greater than is commonly supposed. After making every allowance for the exaggeration of the Jesuits, their increase in China and Japan was rapid and extensive. In the latter country, in particular, a few years after their establishment, great apprehensions were entertained, lest the new converts and their teachers might overturn the established government; and this circumstance, some time after, gave rise to the most cruel persecution which is recorded in the page of history*. The Emperor of China at first also greatly encouraged the settlement of the Society of Jesus—a church was erected within the precincts of the palace, and the officers of the government were encouraged to attend a mathematical school, which these fathers were appointed to teach. Their pretension to the power of working miracles, and their frequent interferences with political affairs, prevented the diffusion of their doctrines, and subverted that influence which their knowledge must otherwise have secured.

* Relation de diverses Voyages, par M. Thevenot.

The Dutch, nearly two centuries ago, had no fewer than forty clergymen employed in their different settlements ; and in the island of Ceylon, which did not then constitute above a tenth part of their Oriental possessions, they had eighty thousand professing Christians enrolled on the books of their clergy *. On the Malabar and Coromandel coasts, the number of Portuguese converts must have been still greater ; for it is asserted of St. Francis Xavier, their first missionary, that he alone baptised upwards of a million of the infidels.

When it is considered, that in these early periods there were no public schools, nor indeed any method of communicating suitable instruction, for want of a common language, it must necessarily follow, that the far greater number of these professing Christians knew little of that religion but the name. Tippoo Saheb expelled forty thousand of them from his dominions, under the awkward appellation of *Kallistauns* ; a fact, from which it appears, that the name itself was but imperfectly known in some parts where it was professed †.

The opinion of Sir Thomas Rhoe, concerning the converts of Agra, is recorded by Thevenot, in terms sufficiently expressive, although in that city their number was far from being so great as in some others ;

* Prideaux's Tracts.

† Vide a Persian Tract on the Revenue of the Mysore.

quelque diligence que j'aye pu faire, je n'aye point vu dans ce pays un seul converty qu'on peut dire estre veritablement Chrestien, et fort peu qui en fasse profession, si ce n'est un petit nombre qui a eté baptisé pour de l'argent, et entretenu par les Jesuits*.

The number of proselytes, however, in the East has varied at different times. In Chiná, Japan, Malacca, and the Phillippines, they were at one period in no inconsiderable multitude. But the close affinity between the Roman Catholic ceremonies and the rites of the Pagan worship, if they made the transition easy to the latter, offered at the same time many facilities and inducements to a relapse. Accordingly Paganism has again resumed its seat in many parts where Catholicism had once been established. There is in both systems the same multiplicity of rites and observances, and the same neglect of moral duties. Each pays an equal respect to days, meats, and external ablutions; and cherishes the same reverence for the virtues of holy water, and a similar neglect or contempt of morality.

A number of converts of this description, widely dispersed among our heathen and Mahomedan subjects in the East, are, perhaps, of all men the least qualified to adorn their profession by a suitable behaviour, and to display the influence of true religion on the conduct of life. Hence flow the prejudices

* Relation de diverses Voyages.

against a system intrinsically excellent, which are known to exist among many even of the higher ranks of the natives. It is difficult to separate, in their minds, that ignorance and vice which is so frequent among the proselytes, from their profession itself. Their religion and its fruits are closely associated in the imagination ; and this circumstance is perhaps alone sufficient to account for the small progress which genuine Christianity has made in the East, after the laborious efforts of various classes of missionaries, for a period of more than two hundred years.

The inferences which may be deduced from this account of the different attempts that have hitherto been made to proselyte the Eastern nations, can convey little more than negative instruction ; their labours are to be regarded more useful as a warning than as a guide : from their example, however, we may infer,

1. That no concessions can safely be made to the prejudices of the natives, by clothing our religion with adventitious ceremonies, and new theological dogmata. The precepts of the Gospel are not only clear and simple, but perfectly consonant to the dictates of reason. Its positive ordinances are few ; to load it with a more complex ritual, would not only diminish its beauty, but would also obstruct its progress, and lessen its usefulness. What would it avail the Hindoo, for example, were we to free him from

the painful observances of his own system, only to impose a fresh yoke, perhaps equally galling; and place up against him a new "writing of ordinances," hardly less difficult to bear. If he could not literally look back to the "flesh-pots of Egypt," he would, like the Portuguese converts, relapse into his former ritual, more congenial to his habits, and presenting but little difference even to his imagination*?

2. We may further infer, from the history of Eastern missions, that the persons selected for the instruction of the more cultivated nations of Asia, ought not to be men unacquainted with human learning. Their skill in the European sciences was the great source of that respect and attention which was paid to the Jesuit missionaries at the court of the Mogul, as well as at those of the Emperors of China and Japan. They communicated in these parts many branches of knowledge highly useful; they reformed

* Ample confirmation of the fact is afforded in several parts of the Eastern world; where, although the Roman Catholic ceremonies, and the profession of that faith was once almost universal, yet scarcely a vestige of either is now to be traced. In the *Lettres edifiantes et curieuses*, of the Jesuits, it was at one period boasted, that many thousand converts were made through almost all the provinces of the Deccan, and particularly in Madura. It is certain, however, that the few traces of Christianity to be discerned in these quarters are extremely faint, or almost wholly obliterated. If persecution eradicated it from Japan and China; in India, it seems to have been lost by a gradual assimilation to the superstitious systems of the country.

their calendar, and improved their skill in astronomy and mathematics: hence they were favourably received in the palaces of the great, and made several converts among the officers of government, whose protection they often found as serviceable as their example was powerful in influencing the opinions of the multitude.

3. In reviewing the various attempts that have been made to introduce the comforts of civilised life among savage tribes, it has almost invariably been found that the greatest progress has been made, where the missionaries were either mechanics, or at least where they began their efforts by teaching the more simple and useful trades. Men wholly illiterate, and in the rudest stages of social union, have been often almost entirely extirpated by the vices they had learned from European intercourse, before they were able to profit by their instructions. The few exceptions from this melancholy fact, that have been yet recorded, are to be discovered where trades-people and mechanics had been left among the natives, instead of clerical or religious missionaries*.

* The island of Otaheite in the South Sea, has suffered a rapid diminution in the number of its inhabitants, since it was first visited by Europeans; to their intercourse may probably be ascribed the frequency of war, of intoxication, and other sources of calamity. Captain Cook estimated the inhabitants, in his time; at 100,000; while at the period of the arrival of the Duff they were reduced to 15,000, and by the last accounts

Lastly, we may infer from the conduct of former missionaries, that the instructors to be sent among the Oriental nations, ought to be men of "quiet and peaceable lives," not disposed to intermeddle in the cabals of party, nor to interfere with the measures of government. It was the neglect of this maxim

from the missionaries, and Captain Turnbull, they were reduced to 5000. The horrid practice of infanticide instead of being checked, had increased; for it is asserted, that the proportion of males to females, is as ten to one. Vide Turnbull's voyage round the world. The fate of the Sandwich islanders, has been almost, in every respect, the reverse of that of the Otaheitean population. Among them the intercourse of Europeans has brought about a great and rapid advancement in civilisation. Instead of fanatical missionaries, who could teach them nothing within their comprehension, or convicts and deserters, who communicate every thing bad, they had American traders who resided among them fourteen years. At Owhyhee, the principal island, the character of the prince, a man of extraordinary talents, has happily coincided with every effort that was made for the improvement of the natives. This chief, named Tamahamad, is portrayed like a second Peter the Great, rising above his age, and the prejudices of savage life; his genius seems formed to lead, rather than to urge forward the progress of improvement among his people. Unfettered by the customs of his country, he has employed American and European artificers in constructing his palace after the style and model of civilised life. By engaging his own subjects to assist in these labours, they have acquired considerable skill in the mechanical arts; they have enabled him to increase his navy, a favourite object of this prince: and "I have no doubt," says Captain Turnbull, "that in very few years, he will erect these islands into a power very far from despicable."

that involved, not only the missionaries themselves in Japan, but their whole flocks, to the rigours of a persecution, the most cruel which is to be met with in the whole records of history. In China and India the new proselytes have sometimes been in danger from a similar catastrophe, arising from the same cause. Christianity holds up no proscription against any particular forms of government; but, supposing all may be useful, it powerfully recommends universal submission to the powers established, as "to the ordinance of God." When taught in this manner, it possesses strong claims to the countenance and support of every government.



SECTION XVII.

OF THE ADVANTAGES DERIVED FROM THE INSTITUTION OF PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS—CONCLUSION.

To conclude, since the grand object of instructing and converting the Eastern world, has hitherto manifestly baffled all the efforts of the different nations who have acquired either territory or influence in these regions, it must be inferred, that something inefficient or unsuitable has entered into all their measures for effecting this great purpose: It must be evident that the true method of influencing the habits and opinions of that great mass of population, has not yet been discovered, or at least has not yet been adopted.

In a matter bearing so direct a reference to the comfort of millions of our race, it might be deemed presumptuous to dictate, and, in any private individuals, perhaps bold, even to speculate upon so great and momentous a concern. To what we have already advanced in a former part of this Essay, it may not, however, be improper to add, that this grand object can, perhaps, be only accomplished in a gradual manner in Asia, as it has already been in the greatest part of Europe; and that it will be effected in both quarters of the world, by means altogether similar, or exactly the same; that is, by a general institution of parochial or district seminaries of education.

In Europe, this measure has for a considerable time been regarded as the only sure and effectual method of diffusing knowledge, and of influencing opinion among the great body of the people: In Asia, experience will probably soon demonstrate that there also it will be productive of the same happy effects; for, in every country, the great outline of human wants and advantages is so nearly the same, that the first are to be relieved, and the last promoted by means almost precisely similar. However strongly it may excite our regret, it is certainly curious to contemplate the causes which may have withdrawn the attention of our missionaries from this measure in the East, and which have prevented them from adopting an expedient so obviously useful.

This acquaintance of these men with European learning, however small, seems to have impressed them with a high idea of their own superiority over the ignorant natives: Hence they seem to have entertained the splendid hope of speedily converting the pagan multitude by the power of their own eloquence alone; they believed themselves capable of at once supplanting their crude and monstrous ritual, by a religious system which they justly regarded as far superior, both in truth and usefulness.

In entertaining these magnificent expectations, the missionaries seem to have supposed that they were supported by the example and success of the first teachers of Christianity, who, by their preaching, had eradicated superstition from the Roman provinces, after it had taken hold of the soil, by a thousand ramifications, and who planted in its stead, not merely a new faith, but one which contraverted the preconceived notions of the inhabitants. They imagined that by pursuing similar means, they might accomplish the same important end. Forgetting that the Apostles had uniformly felt and acknowledged that their own endeavours were inadequate to produce the mighty consequences that followed them, and had on that account termed them "the foolishness of preaching;" adding the express declaration, that while they "planted and watered," the increase was the gift of Heaven.

The missionaries for a while seem not even to have apprehended, much less to have foreseen and calculated, the great difficulty in changing the belief of a whole people, whose minds were preoccupied by a different system, established by time and countenanced by authority: they were not aware, that the innumerable deities and rites of paganism are closely interwoven with every circumstance of business and of pleasure, and that it is almost impossible to lay aside the observance of them, without, at the same time, renouncing the commerce of mankind, and the amusements of society *. These circumstances were overlooked which might have taught them that the *sudden* conversion of a multitude to a new system of faith and practice, could only be effected by the aid of the same power which had assisted the Apostles "in turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just."

The influence and the resources of Europeans, even in India, was at first too slender to countenance the idea of erecting any general establishment for the instruction of youth. No adequate fund could then be provided for such purposes, and what was, perhaps, still more essentially necessary to success, no middle class of inhabitants then existed in Asia, like the native born offspring of Europeans, nor any intermediate race, qualified like it, to instruct the youth in the learning of both continents.

* Gibbon's Decline and Fall, &c.

In pursuing that line of conduct, which is still unhappily adopted, the first missionaries appear more excusable in these earlier periods than their successors can be deemed at present. In their time, the advantages of conferring elementary education on the body of the people, were far from being generally understood. In the most civilised nations of Europe, parochial schools were then but partially established. In many countries, they were either unknown, or the introduction of them was dreaded as a dangerous inlet to schism, heresy, and innovation. It was not till after the decisive experiments of Frederick II. had demonstrated their beneficial effects in the province of Silesia, that they were generally established throughout Germany and the Austrian dominions.

From that period the establishment of schools has begun to be considered as the grand remedy against vice and mendicancy among the lower orders in every country of Europe. Their salutary influence in removing many of the most inveterate evils of society has been since felt and acknowledged, almost equally in every stage of its progress, from the utmost barbarism to a state of the most perfect civilisation; and the future historian will find himself obliged to record its beneficial effects on the morals of Africa as well as of Europe.

In the former country, according to the latest information, it has become a pretty general custom

among the professors of the Mahommedan religion, to establish schools in the interior wilds of that continent. By a report to a committee of the House of Commons, from the Directors of the Sierra Leone Company, we learn that about seventy years ago, a small number of Mahommedans established themselves in a country about forty miles north of that settlement, called by them the Mandingo country. Agreeable to a general practice among the adherents of their faith, they formed seminaries, in which the Arabic language and the doctrines of Mahommed were taught.

In these societies the customs of Islamism were adopted, and in particular, that of not selling any of their children for slaves : laws founded on the Koran were introduced ; those practices which chiefly militated against population were abandoned ; and in spite of many internal convulsions a great degree of comparative civilisation and security were introduced. The influx of inhabitants, as well as the increase of population was rapid, and the whole power over that part of the country has fallen into the hands of these Mahommedan teachers. Many of those who have been taught in these schools are emigrating to the neighbouring kingdoms, where they succeed to power, and introduce a considerable portion of their religion and laws, by extending the same system of scholastic instruction.

The ascendancy thus obtained by these Mahomedans, is so marked and powerful, that several of the neighbouring chiefs have adopted their names, with a view of drawing to themselves some share of that respect with which they are invested *.

In Silesia, as we have already noticed, the effects of the *trivial schools*, as they are there called, have been still more salutary and conspicuous. They have there been established on better principles, and have been conducted with greater energy and regularity. The industry and virtue, as well as elementary learning, which have been conferred on the inhabitants of that province, has tended rapidly to increase their number, and have uniformly kept pace with the extension of these seminaries. So late as the conquest 1752, there were but few schools in Silesia; and these were in such a languid condition, that a few only of the peasants were initiated in the common branches of education.

During the short space of forty years, that succeeded this period, 3500 seminaries had been established, and almost the whole body of the people had received some tincture of learning, as well as the invaluable habits of industry and virtue.

Before the seven years war, the knowledge and curiosity of the people were so limited, as scarcely to

* Winterbottom's Travels in Africa.

bring into demand a single periodical publication ; while in 1798 seventeen literary productions, by the day, the week, or the month, had an extensive circulation, and conveyed valuable information to the people on many subjects immediately and generally useful.

“ Probably no country in Europe,” says an American, from whom this statement is given, “ could so strongly contest our superiority, in conferring learning on the people as Germany ; and she for this favourable distinction is indebted principally to Frederick II. By the zeal with which he pursued the purpose of spreading useful knowledge among all classes of the people who were his subjects ; by the influence of his example, and of his success, many thousands have been benefited far beyond the limits of his dominions *.”

In Great Britain, where parochial schools have been so long and so generally established, as in some measure to identify them with the constitution itself, we are, perhaps, unable fully to appreciate their value, or to ascertain exactly what portion of our advantages may be peculiarly derived from these institutions. The general diffusion of knowledge, of industry, and of virtuous habits among the lower ranks of our citizens, has, however, been uniformly point-

* Adam's Letters on Silesia.

ed out by foreigners, as the sources not only of our unexampled wealth, but of that preponderating influence which the Empire has obtained in the great community of nations.

A race of intelligent individuals, they allege, is continually emerging from the mass of the people ; ever ready to step forward and invigorate the ranks of our warriors and statesmen, as often as they have been thinned by accident, or enfeebled by luxury.— Hence, they assert, has originated not only the unexampled extension of our commerce, but our celebrity in the different departments whether of science or of war*.

* Unhappily our schools though general, have not been universally established even in our domestic empire. Some persons have urged, and with much plausibility, that the distracted and frequently unsettled state of Ireland arises chiefly from the want of a sober and virtuous education rendered accessible to the children of the peasantry. To ascribe its disturbances to any political cause, or peculiar grievance, and to hold up this to the multitude, may serve the purposes of the factions, but such a position is totally unwarranted by every fact. The laws by which that part of the united kingdom is governed, are, with a very few exceptions, precisely the same with those which regulate Middlesex : The government administering them consists of the same persons ; there can, therefore, exist no political grievances but such as are felt in every other part of the empire. The grossest immorality, idleness, and intoxication, they assert, prevail among the lower ranks ; and where there is a total want of education and good principles,

In whatever degree we may credit these general observations, on the utility of public instruction, they are unquestionably more peculiarly applicable at present to the northern part of the island ; where, from

Y 3

it is easy to persuade the multitude, that government, and not their own vices, is the cause of their misery. From the want of established parochial seminaries in several parts of England the poor of some districts have greatly increased, and the rates for their support have arisen to an enormous sum. Perhaps the multifarious, contradictory mass, called the poor laws, will finally be superseded by one simple regulation, providing a general education, and suitable employment for the children of the lower classes. Nothing but the length of time since the first establishment of these laws, and the most inveterate prejudices which from this circumstance have taken hold of the people, could compel them for a single year, to submit to a system so incongruous, inefficient, and hostile to industry and virtue. A sum of so many millions held up annually as a bribe to idleness and vice, throws a deep stain upon the knowledge and political economy of the country.— The reputation of charity and humanity which this bounty has been supposed to confer upon the nation, has been greatly misunderstood, or most injudiciously bestowed ; since the number of poor in England has increased to a tenfold proportion of what would have existed under a system less miserable and injurious in its effects upon society. In India, as well as in Europe, there is a considerable portion of *Enaum* or Charity-lands set apart for the maintenance of the poor ; and there, if they had not been misapplied by the corruption of the officers appointed to manage them, they would have produced the same baneful effects on the morals and industry of the people, as those which have been invariably seen to result from them in Europe.

the happy constitution of its parochial schools, a very considerable portion of literature is placed within the reach of the poorest individuals of the community; and where that share of knowledge thus diffused among the commonalty, can alone account for the uncommon proportion of the inhabitants, which, in almost every quarter of the world, has arisen to wealth and distinction. The Count Faujus de St. Fond has admitted this fact, so honourable to this country, by asserting, that to the migration of our citizens into foreign countries, these nations are frequently indebted for the brightest ornaments which they possess*: and Dr. Currie, in a late work, has perhaps assigned the true cause of this acknowledged fact: he has ascribed it to the liberal and virtuous education so generally bestowed on the common people †.

Since, then, the institution of public seminaries, for the instruction of youth, has been so eminently beneficial in every country where they have been introduced and supported; and since their effects have been found so peculiarly salutary among the inhabitants of Great Britain, may we not hope that a time will soon arrive, when these establishments shall be no longer confined to our domestic empire: that the period so earnestly desired by the pious and benevolent, shall be no longer deferred; when the native subjects of our foreign dominions shall be permitted

* Vide his Mineralogical Tour.

† The Life of the Poet Burns.

to share in a public benefit, that has been so long enjoyed by the parent state, and proved so eminently useful?

If it be too sanguine to affirm, that the remote and independent nations of the Eastern world can be all instructed and improved by any effort of ours, still it ought to be remembered, that there are many wide and populous tracts in that quarter of the globe (so close in our connection,) who have now a direct claim upon our aid, and from whom, without inhumanity, we cannot withhold our best endeavours to communicate a share of whatever religious or moral knowledge we may possess.

Were it possible to transfer, unimpaired, the whole spirit of our scholastic institutions, and their discipline, to the regions of Hindostan, is it very extravagant to suppose, that they might there multiply and invigorate the languid seminaries of our native subjects; or that they might operate powerfully, as they have done every where else, in disseminating knowledge, virtue, and true religion among the innumerable multitudes of Asia? This measure might soon draw after it, (if it does not actually imply) a daily, and weekly instruction from the school, the press, and the pulpit: and if it be possible to renew the energies of an indolent and corrupted people, it might prove the means of finally rescuing them from that abyss of poverty and superstition, in which igno-

rañce and vice, more than any other cause, have contributed for many ages to detain them.

These suppositions imply no impossibility : and as far as the instruction of the British subjects in Asia is concerned, the task may be difficult ; but by no means so desperate, or Utopian, as some have represented it. Of the propositions which are submitted in this Essay, it may be asserted, that none are impracticable ; since it is certain that every one of them has already been adopted, and put in execution, on a scale more or less extensive. The plans above recommended, if they have not the ambiguous merit of novelty, may all claim the negative commendation of being neither dangerous, nor altogether useless ; for some benefit has already been derived from their partial adoption ; and, perhaps, in no one case have they either wholly miscarried or proved injurious.

From the foregoing sketch, imperfect as it may seem, it may be obviously inferred, that the far greater part of the British subjects in the East are greatly removed from a state of primitive barbarism : they are settled in fixed habitations, collected into cities, accustomed to subordination, and in a considerable degree acquainted with the arts of civilised life. To improve farther those who have already made so many advances to civilisation, is certainly a much easier task than to cultivate such as remain in

fories so recently atchieved, having greatly encreased its connection with Upper India, may, at the same time, have opened to us, in the Panjab, a wide field, which in future may signalize the labours of European teachers, by presenting to them a vast country where no Brahminical prejudices, nor hereditary priesthood can obstruct their progress.

Amidst so many concurring circumstances, of a favourable kind, the zeal spread throughout Great Britain, at present ardent, ought not to be suffered to evaporate without attempting some new efforts in favour of her Eastern subjects. To neglect so happy an opportunity, as that which seems now to be presented to her by the "Ruler of Nations," would be an injustice to herself, as well as undutiful to the many millions "whom Providence has cast into her arms, for their protection and welfare. *" Whatever may be attempted, whether particular efforts may hereafter succeed or prove abortive, the wise and considerate have this consolation left, that human intercourse is never left without resources; but is ordained, by its very author to become, by its own energies, the source of mutual improvement among all the different classes of which our race is composed.

* Sir William Jones's Work.





APPENDIX.

“ My Lord, I have the honour of transmitting to your Excellency the address of the inhabitants of this settlement, on the splendid termination of the Mahratta war. I feel it almost superfluous to express my entire concurrence in the sentiments of that meeting. As an Englishman, I must admire and be grateful to the men, who have raised my country to so high a pitch of prosperity and glory.

“ Extending, however, the view beyond the immediate prospect of our national advantages, it is most pleasing to reflect, that the result of this war affords a hope of equal benefit to the great mass of the people, whose rulers have been conquered. If the annals of the Indian history are retraced, and more particularly the events of the later years, it will be found that this vast peninsula has presented one continued scene of anarchy and misery. Constant revolutions, without even a professed legitimate object, have succeeded each other. Wars of great and petty chieftains, unwarranted in their origin, and unprincipled in their conduct, for the sole object of robbery and plunder, have depopulated and laid waste the general face of this unhappy country. Justice, order, consideration of public and private rights, no where appear in relief of this melancholy picture.

“ Happily a period has arrived to these barbarous excesses. For the first time, the blessings of universal tranquillity may be expected. That system of India, which would comprehend in one bond of mu-

tual defence, and reciprocal forbearance, the predatory chiefs of this great empire, deserves the admiration of all the civilized world. That system, one of the noblest efforts of the wisdom and patriotism of a subject, which has founded British greatness upon Indian happiness, demands, in a particular manner, the thanks and applause of the country."

The suggestions advanced concerning the improvement of the Hindoo husbandry, and the means recommended for the prevention of famine, will, perhaps, appear to some persons still more romantic and impracticable than the scheme proposed for reducing the number of the native armies, and promoting tranquillity. That such objections should be urged, must not be deemed surprising; they ought rather to be expected: for only a few years have elapsed, since the period when, in Britain itself, it was deemed excellent husbandry to lay down the lands to pasture, after being scourged to barrenness, without either a green crop, a fallow, or even a handful of hay-seeds. The present practice in Scotland is so different from that in use forty years ago, that the recommendation of it at that period must have been regarded as still more romantic and absurd than any plan held up for the adoption of the Hindoos in the preceding remarks. Agricultural practices differ so much in different districts, and at various periods, that there must always be some who object to every innovation, as either impracticable or dangerous. These persons hold up with great triumph the prejudices of the Asi-

atics, their superstition, and their veneration for ancient use, as insuperable obstacles to all improvement. The state of China, where the people labour under the same obstinate attachment to ancient custom, and are guided by prejudices equally strong, clearly demonstrates all such arguments, however specious, to be really destitute of all solidity.

The sketch laid down in the Ayeen Acbery of the general management of rural affairs during the reign of Acber, will shew in what state the Hindoo husbandry actually *has been*; and a very brief account of the rural economy of China, will demonstrate to what perfection, in a similar climate, and in circumstances equally unpromising, it *may be* carried.

The materials for this purpose are scanty; fortunately, however, they are of good authority, and perfectly decisive with regard to the agricultural state of the country. The testimony of the Chinese in Calcutta; of Dr. Dinwiddie, of the Chinese embassy; and above all, the account of Sir George Staunton, clearly establish the vast population of that empire. There can be little reason altogether to discredit the account of that Mandarin, who stated the population of the fifteen provinces at 333 millions: the number of large towns and populous districts through which the embassy passed, with every particular of their rural economy mentioned, all tend to corroborate this estimate, enormous as it may seem.

The surface of China seems not only cultivated to the utmost ; but, almost in every place, it is the culture of the garden transferred to the field. The occupancy of farmers, who are in many cases small proprietors, generally consist only of a few acres, continually in crop : there are no large capitalists farming extensive districts. Throughout the whole country you observe few cattle, and almost no inclosures. The small supply of cattle and sheep brought from Tartary, are fed in the house on chopped straw : so little milk, butter, or cheese, is made, that there was some difficulty in procuring a small supply of these articles for the use of the embassy.

From excessive population, and the scarcity of animal food, the poverty of the great body of the people is as conspicuous as the meanness of their fare. Great numbers are forced to live upon the water, on what they can there procure. This is more particularly the case on the numerous rivers and canals which intersect the country in all directions. On a single branch of the Pehio, (or white river), where the embassy passed, 100,000 men were found in the junks and different craft that plied the stream ; yet these form but an inconsiderable portion of the people who live entirely upon the water in other parts *. Even the embankments of rivers, where they are raised up to carry shipping over the hollows, are not lost to husbandry. Those of the Euhó are

* Vide Sir George Staunton's Chinese embassy.

laid out in gravel walks, and slopes, upon which are planted fruit-trees and all kinds of culinary vegetables.

The canals, though they run in every direction, are crowded either with towns or military stations, on their banks, at very small distances. From this circumstance, the police of the country is so perfect, that theft or robbery is seldom committed, though the cottages are unguarded. Their dwellings are constructed, in the country, of mud for the walls, with larix and straw for the roof; in the towns, the walls are brick, and the roofs of tiles; hardly in any case are there windows of better materials than oiled paper. These dwellings, mean as they appear, are tolerably neat, and, in a temperate climate like China, are found not uncomfortable. Each cottage has a garden attached to it, and conveniences for rearing hogs and ducks, two great articles of Chinese live stock.

The great aim of the Chinese farmer is the raising the largest possible quantity of food; for this end, he conducts all operations with spirit and the strictest economy. The wheat is either sown in drills, or is dibbled; the number of hands necessary for this purpose is of great advantage; while the saving of seed by it has been computed to be no less in quantity than the whole annual subsistence of all the people in Great Britain. Wheat is made into vermicelli, or soft cakes, by steam; but rice is the favourite food—this, with vegetables and garlic, is the grand sustenance of the common people. Their method of

planting, watering, reaping, and threshing this crop, shews their husbandry to much advantage. By constant irrigation, they are enabled to raise two crops in the year, of all kinds except sugar. The land under this crop lies for a short time unoccupied in winter; but they admit of no fallow, for the same field is cropped from age to age.

In order to sustain the fertility of the soil during constant cropping, means of procuring manure are practised, which have never been thought of by any other people—all animal excretions are carefully collected in vessels sunk in the road sides. The dust from the roads is gathered up and sold—human excrement, urine, and the very soap-suds used in shaving, are collected with care. But the grand effort for preserving fertility is irrigation; mills, chain-pumps, and embankments, are frequent in every province—and the husbandman, when he repairs to the field, is as regularly furnished with a scoop for watering, or a hand-pump, as the European labourer with a hoe or spade. The practice of watering is a complete and well arranged system.

From lands thus diligently cultivated, and in continual crop, a vast quantity of sustenance must be produced; yet all is insufficient for the population of China, where every animal, clean or unclean, is used for food. The grub which preys on the roots of the sugar-cane is an article of food; and, after winding off the silk from the worm, that insect is devoured in

its aurelia state. In the mountainous parts, which only can be spared for raising timber, the cones of the larix, the most common tree, are used as a part of diet. Nor are all those means found adequate to the consumption; mountains and rocks are bared of their soil, which is carried to parts better fitted for cultivation; and the sides of hills are terraced for the raising of grain, in a country the remotest parts of which are filled with people.

The most approved practices, and the soundest principles of good husbandry among European nations, are found totally inapplicable to the circumstances of this singular people. It has been proved by irrisistible arguments, as well as good practice, that horses, in most situations, are more advantageous for the team in England than oxen*: in China, this reasoning would be absurd, and the practice ruinous. There a pair of horses would eat up the whole sustenance of the family; even a single bullock cannot always be afforded for the plough: in some cases men, but oftener women, draw the plough, while the person who holds it, must at the same time be employed in sowing the seed. All our rules for the construction of the implements of husbandry are thus done away, since the more slender, they may, in such circumstances, prove more useful; nor will the Chinese plough, contemptible as it appears, be deemed an

* Vide Report for Northumberland, by Messrs. Baillie and Culley.

Improper instrument, when the nature of the work to be executed is kept in view.

A farmer's wife drawing a plough of three or four pounds weight, in a possession of as many acres, are circumstances which, however absurd to us they may appear, are vouched by eye-witnesses of the first respectability, and constitute a part of that husbandry which supports, if not the most wealthy, certainly the most populous empire ever recorded in the annals of the human race. The taxes on land, paid by these farmers, amount from ten to twenty per cent.; and the rent paid to the proprietor, is said to be about one half of the produce.

After all these operations on land, it is doubtful whether, on the same space, it yields an equal proportion of food to that which is drawn from the water. All stagnant waters, as well as the rivers, are stored with fish, some methods of catching which are peculiar to the Chinese. The Hew-tze, or fishing cormorant, is employed for this purpose. The boats are innumerable, and ten of these animals are employed in each. After diving and catching their prey, their fidelity is secured by a ring, which is placed around the neck, in order to prevent them from swallowing what they have taken. Aquatic animals are also taken in great numbers, and particularly ducks. After the method of the Hindoos, the fowler conceals his whole body in the water except the head, which is inserted into a pumkin, with openings for the eyes; in this

manner he is suffered to approach till he can pull down the animal under water by the feet. Many inhabitants of boats live with their families entirely upon water, and supply themselves with vegetables, which are raised on a floating terrace, supported by a kind of basket-work underneath. Some of the lakes in China, which are peopled in this manner, are of great extent; and the canals are far superior to every effort of a similar nature, that hath hitherto been executed by human skill; the imperial canal alone, extending the length of five hundred miles, over valleys, and through mountains, that seemed to bid defiance to all navigation.

Two very important branches of rural economy, which are almost peculiar to the Chinese, and which afford employment to a vast number of hands, are the productions of tea and silk. The tea plant is raised generally on mounds, clefts, and hills, that are incapable of other cultivation; when cultivated by the hand of the farmer, it is planted in rows four feet asunder, and dressed with all the correctness of Chinese husbandry. Vast tracts of land are employed in raising this product, which affords the universal beverage of all ranks, and which lessens the destructive appetite for spirituous liquors. The chachaw, or flower of tea, *camellia sesanqua* of Linnaeus, grows on the mountain tops: it is mixed with tea by way of improving its flavour, and affords a fine aromatic oil. The operose process of rolling and roasting the tea for preservation, affords employment to many other

hands besides those of the farmer, from the great number of iron and earthen plates made use of for this purpose.

One half, perhaps, of all the labour in China may be termed in-door work, and is performed by the women: they raise mulberries, feed worms, spin cotton, and are almost the only weavers. They are frequently not permitted to sit at table, but are confined to drudge like menial servants. In many provinces their feet are crippled from their infancy, so that they are necessarily confined in whatever employment they may be placed.

Though the Chinese are chiefly employed in cultivating rice, Indian corn, and millet, yet in the variety of crops they are not inferior to the ryots of Hindostan; and in almost every branch of husbandry they are greatly superior. This appears conspicuous in the neatness and regularity with which the former cultivate the sugar cane, a favourite crop of both nations. I have frequently compared the size of their cane with that of Bengal, of which it is nearly four times the size. This is partly owing to the better *heart* in which they keep their fields, but probably still more to the planting it in rows, and careful hand-hoeing. The free admission of air to all their standing corn, is an important consideration with the Chinese cultivator, and for this he probably is indebted for the peculiar health and richness of his crops. The medication of their seeds in cess-pool water, they also

more free from colloquial quaintness and vulgarity. Wretchedly as this work has been translated into our language, it has yet afforded more information on the state of India than the writings of any author of the present age.

Tuffussil Hossein Khan, a late nobleman, who executed many difficult and important diplomatic functions, under the government of Mr Hastings, affords another splendid proof of the attainments of which the Asiatics are capable in European learning. The Latin, French, and Italian, as well as English language, were familiar to this accomplished statesman. His translations of Addison and several of our classics are executed with equal taste and accuracy; the charge against the Orientals of tasteless floridity, of unchaste ornaments, and of inaccurate and superficial knowledge of all scientific learning, by his writings, has either been greatly weakened or completely overthrown.

Several letters of this extraordinary person have been preserved by his friend and correspondent in Britain, Mr David Anderson. One is inserted as a specimen of their merit; the more willingly, as it gives some account, towards the close, of his own studies, after he had finally retired from the busy scenes which engaged him while he acted as a political agent of our government, and the prime Minister in the government of Oude. Of this letter, originally Persian, the following translation is nearly li-

teral* : After the usual compliments he thus proceeds :—

“ Your communication arrived at a time when I was become impatient to hear of your health and welfare ; it gave me great pleasure. May God long preserve you, who are thus so kindly mindful of your friends. The attachment which I feel toward you ; the impression which your friendship has left on my mind, and the distress which our separation has occasioned to me, exceed the bounds of expression. But as your residence in England seems agreeable to yourself, preferring your happiness to my own, I must submit. Thank God, the tidings of your welfare, and of the satisfaction which you enjoy in your own country are such as afford consolation to your far distant friends.

“ The Nabob Aly Ibrahim Khan is in perfect health, and continues to devote his attention to the administration of justice in Benares : I have written a letter to him, communicating your message. Mahajee Scindiah now rules, with great power, over all the countries dependent on Agra and Delhi. In consequence of the difficulties in which that chief was involved about two years ago, from the insurrection of some of the Rajahs in the neighbourhood,

* A judicious account of Tuffussil Hossein Khan has been inserted in the Asiatic Annual Register, by Mr David Anderson.

matters as are more immediately the objects of my duty.

“ You ask me, if I continue my studies as usual ; or if my employment in public business has diverted my thoughts from literary pursuits ? Some time ago I employed myself for a few months, in reading the history of England ; and chiefly with a view of acquiring a competent knowledge of the language. I have since given it up, and have been engaged in translating the *Principia* of Sir Isaac Newton ; Thomas Simson’s book on Algebra ; Emerson on mechanics ; Appolonius *de Sectione Rationis* translated into Latin by Dr Halley ; and a work on Conic Sections by De l’Hopital, a Frenchman. All these books I am translating into Arabic, besides several short treatises on logarithms, curve lines, &c. Some of them I have already finished, and some more of them will soon be brought to a conclusion—In short I continue to devote my leisure hours to these pursuits.—May your prosperity and welfare be perpetuated.”

This respectable native was in the beginning of 1800 seized with an illness, which in a few weeks proved fatal. Lord Teignmouth, who was long intimately acquainted with his singular merits, often employed him during the period of his government, and he has since drawn a sketch of his character, which all who knew him must acknowledge to be just.—“ Tuffussil Hossein Khan,” his Lordship remarks, “ united in an eminent degree, an extensive know-

ledge of mankind with the deepest erudition. His conversation was polite and instructive ; his manners elegant and engaging ; his integrity firm ; his honour unimpeached. It was his great predilection for mathematical knowledge, that induced him to cultivate an acquaintance with the English and with European authors, and from this source he derived that superior knowledge which so much distinguished him among his countrymen."

To some readers there may appear an omission in the foregoing tract, which it may not be improper to notice in this place : it relates to the plan of colonisation, which has so frequently been attempted in ancient as well as in modern times. This measure has been wholly omitted, as incompatible with the prosperity and safety of the parent state. Many speculative writers, however, have maintained that the most speedy and effectual mode of improving our dependencies in the East, would be that of colonising them with a portion of European population. In the present circumstances of our domestic empire, such a project is, we apprehend, neither safe nor useful ; and to effect the measure in India, to an extent at all likely to produce any beneficial influence on that part of Asia, seems altogether impracticable.

In a climate so hostile as that of India to European constitutions, all our colonists have been found soon to languish in their bodily health and in their spirit of enterprise and activity : their numbers, in-

stead of being increased, have rapidly diminished, and to such a degree, that in all the settlements, whether of the Portuguese, Dutch, French, or English, the race of settlers must have long since been annihilated, but for the fresh supplies which annually arrive from Europe. Their offspring by native females, by far the most considerable portion of the society, in the course of a few generations, assimilates so closely with the indigenous inhabitants in their complexion, in their manners, and in the whole of their habits, that any remaining difference that may subsist is scarcely discernible. The diminished respect which they receive on account of their spurious origin, their low rank, as well as their contemptible number, precludes almost all hope of any beneficial influence being ever derived by the Asiatics from their intercourse. For a period of two hundred years, their condition has been uniformly regarded by the natives as low, degraded, and un consequential. An experiment of such considerable extent and duration has already, it would seem, sufficiently demonstrated the inanity of every expectation that may have been formed of benefiting the Asiatics by colonising their country from this quarter.

In the mean time, the great emigration that has constantly been issuing from Holland, Spain, and Portugal, in order to people or improve their vast dominions in Asia and America, has produced consequences of the most important and alarming nature to the domestic prosperity of these states. Du-

ring the two preceding centuries, a period when their intercourse with their foreign settlements was most extensive, the parent states have been very rapidly sinking in their relative degree of power, industry, and rank among the great community of European states. They have not only lost that spirit of enterprise which had long maintained their consequence ; but their independence and their very existence as separate powers already appear either dubious or in a very questionable shape.

Their experience it is fair to convert into a lesson of wisdom. Great Britain has for a considerable period possessed foreign dominions on a scale far more enlarged than any other modern nation ; their extent for some time past, has perhaps exceeded that of the whole Roman empire. Should she, therefore, open the door to emigration, and like these nations offer encouragement for the removal of her scanty population to the wide regions of the eastern and western hemispheres, the same irretrievable catastrophe which has already overwhelmed her colonising neighbours, must in all probability soon assail herself. Her circumstances seem to be still more marked and dangerous ; with a very limited European territory, and a population comparatively small, she has for a considerable time almost singly opposed the approaching subjugation and despotism of Europe ; the continental powers themselves have been in the habit of looking up to her as the sole bulwark of whatever portion of liberty or indepen-

dence may yet remain among them. In what situation must they be left, or what must be her own fate, should she disperse her defenders over the wide regions of Asia and America, in order to people and improve her foreign colonies? The advantage, however great, would be lost in the hazard and expence of the experiment; for it is confessed, that even gold itself may be bought at a price too dear.

This reasoning seems the more conclusive, as it is well known that the spirit of emigration has already begun and made some progress in different parts of the empire. Ever since the year 1730, the Highland districts of North Britain have annually sent a considerable portion of their inhabitants to the wilds of America. The many thousands of our valuable population which have thus been lost to the community is not the only consideration that presents itself in estimating this calamity. The most enterprising portion of the inhabitants is not only for ever lost, but gone perhaps to augment the resources and strengthen the power of a rival state. The loss of capital must also enter into this account; for in the year 1802, no less than 4510 individuals migrated from the Highlands to America; and although they consisted of the poorer classes in that country, the money carried along with them was not less than £.100,000 sterling.

An intelligent writer, in answer to Lord Selkirk's observations upon this subject, thus argues: " The

direct loss sustained by this country, in consequence of these emigrations, is much greater than is, perhaps, at first perceived. History teaches us that the internal strength of a nation is in no case to be estimated by the extent of its territory, but by the number of its citizens, and the utility of their labours : that the population, the wealth, and the power of a state, cannot be supported with permanence by any resources, exclusive of home productions, raised and augmented by an increasing improvement of the soil. Other sources of wealth may be cut off by political convulsions : but nothing short of a convulsion of nature, annihilating the fund on which the national industry is to be exercised, can destroy the basis of natural wealth, derived from the population and produce of the country itself. While there exists an acre of uncultivated and waste land within the kingdom, or a market for the fish which swarm upon the coasts, or sale for the manufactured produce of our industry, every man who leaves the country must be considered as a national loss."

The nature and extent of this loss may be estimated by adverting to the following considerations : A very great number of inhabitants must embark in the measure, and leave their country ; otherwise no discernible effect can be produced in the new settlement into which they are introduced. In some of the districts already noticed, nearly one-third of the active hands are supposed to have emigrated to these foreign settlements. The industry thus transferred to

another country, is very great; but the expence of education and maintenance must also be taken into account. The period of life for emigration may, in general, be reckoned from fifteen to twenty-five; the precise time in which individuals are in a capacity to remunerate the state for the unrequited consumption and expenditure of infancy and youth. The loss in point of population, by removing colonists at this period of life, is much greater than their actual number seems to imply: for although an equal number of children under five years of age were carried off, the effective population would receive comparatively little injury; since other children would supply the place thus vacated for them. The expence of their maintenance would be trifling; while on the other hand, it would be long before a nation could recover the loss even of a smaller portion of young men and females between fifteen and twenty-five years; though in this case the expence incurred for their maintenance would be much greater.

In this manner has the system of colonising their foreign settlements operated against the population, wealth, and industry of the parent states; there seem, however, to exist in Britain some peculiar circumstances, which must render the operation of this system doubly destructive. There the navy, the army, and an increased capital has created a great demand for labour. Many thousand hands are annually employed from Ireland as farm servants and day labourers along the western districts of Britain. It is

clear, however, that a decrease of the active population must raise the price of labour; and this circumstance throws a powerful bar in the way of manufactures, and of all kinds of improvement.

It is now a well known fact, that even in the poorest districts of the Highlands, the emigrants have carried along with them very considerable sums of money; and this capital ought by no means to be estimated by its bare amount; for it is of that kind which was employed in agriculture, the most useful to the state of all modes in which capital can be employed. The industry of every country is nearly proportioned to the capital which excites it; and capital itself is reciprocally increased by that very industry which it has excited. If it be hoarded up in gold and silver, it affords no profit to the state; if employed in exciting agricultural industry, it is the most beneficial mode in which it can be engaged. It is precisely this denomination of capital which emigration has been annually draining from North Britain ever since 1750. The description of emigrants, too, who have removed along with it, is not less valuable, since the Highlanders have been long known to form the bravest soldiers, and the most gallant defenders of their country. No accurate statement, perhaps, has been made of the total amount, either of the capital, or of the number of men who, during the last seventy years, have thus removed to America, and who are thereby lost for ever to the nation. The value of both, if fairly estimated, would probably alarm us;

for it is well known, that the greater part of this wealth and industry is not merely lost to Britain, but is thrown into the opposite scale, and is employed in strengthening the resources of a rising, jealous, and often hostile state. It is remarkable, in these circumstances of the country, that a nobleman of reputed talents should hold up emigration as a relief to North Britain, and should actually lead a colony to the wilds of America by his own personal interference and direction; and it is perhaps equally strange, that a speculative writer, of considerable ability, should, nearly at the same time, have recommended the colonisation of British India, as one of the best means of civilising that extensive country—when, in fact, the whole inhabitants of the British Isles would make a very motely and inconsiderable appearance amidst the countless multitudes of Asia.

THE END.

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